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# THE FABLES OF AESOP



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The Fables of Aesop.

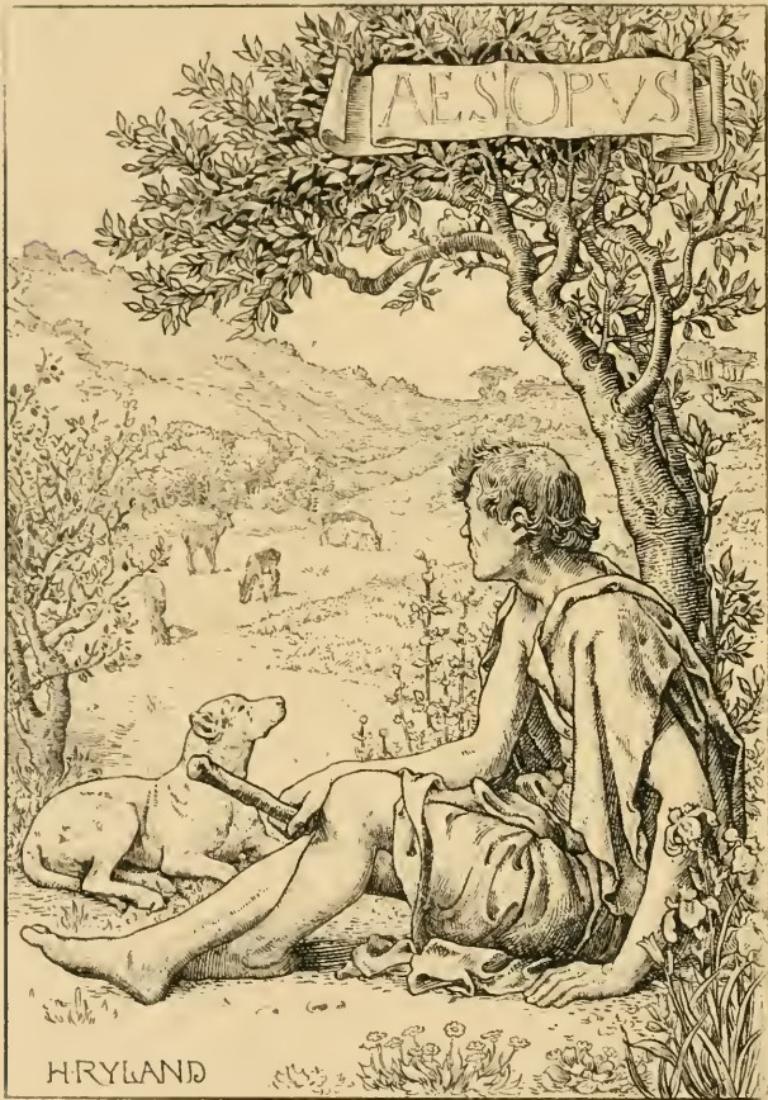
II.

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Ballantyne Press  
BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.  
EDINBURGH AND LONDON



AESOPVS



HYLAND







# The Fables of Aesop

as first printed by WILLIAM CAXTON in 1484  
with those of Avian, Alfonso and Poggio,  
now again edited and induced  
by Joseph Jacobs.

## II.

### TEXT AND GLOSSARY.

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55

895 35  
C. 1870

LONDON. PUBLISHED BY DAVID NUTT IN  
THE STRAND. M.D.CCCLXXXIX.

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1889  
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¶ Here begynneth the booke  
of the subtyl historyes and fables  
of Esope whiche were translated  
out of Frensshe in to Englyssh  
by william Carton



At Westmynstre En the yere of oure Lorde  
.m.cccc.lxxxij



C Here begyneth the presace or prologue of  
the fyrsyte book of Esope



Romulus son of thybere of the  
Cyte of Atyque / gretynge / Esope  
man of grece / subtyll and In-  
genyous / techeth in his fables  
how men ought to kepe and  
rewle them well / And to thende that he  
shold shewe the lyf and customes of al maner  
of men / he induceth the byrdes / the trees and  
the beeftes spekyng to thende that the men  
may knowe wherfore the fables were found /  
In the whiche he hath wretton the malyce of  
the euylle people and the argument of the  
Improbis / He techeth also to be humble and  
for to vse wordes / And many other fayr En-  
samples reherced and declared here after / the  
whiche I Romulus have traunslated oute of grekes  
tongue in to latyn tongue / the whiche yf thou  
redē them / they shalle aguyse and sharpe thy  
wyttē and shal gyue to the cause of Joye /

C The first fable is of the cock and of the  
precious stone /



s a Cok ones sought his pasture in  
the donghylle / he fond a precious  
stone / to whome the Cok sayd /  
Ha a fayre stone and precious  
thow arte here in the fylth And  
yf he that defyreth the had found the / as I  
haue he wold hane take the vp / and sette the  
ageyne in thy fyrst estate / but in vayne I haue  
found the / For no thynge I haue to do with  
the / ne no good I may doo to the ne thou  
to me / And thys fable sayde Esope to them  
that rede this book / For by the cok is to  
vnderstond the fool which retcheth not of  
savyence ne of wysedome / as the cok retcheth  
and setteth not by the precious stome / And by  
the stome is to vnderstond this fayre and play-  
faunt book

C This second fable is of the wulf and the  
lambe /



f the Innocent and of the shrewe  
Esope reherceth to vs suche a  
fable / howe it was so / that the  
lambe and the wulf had bothe  
thurit / and went both to a Ryuer  
for to drynke / C It happed that the wulf dranke  
aboue & the lambe dranke bynethe / And as the  
wulf sawe & percyued the lambe / he sayd with  
a hyghe voys / Ha knaue why hast thou troubled  
and

and fowled my water/ whiche I hold now drynke /  
Allas my lord sauf your grece/ For the water  
cometh fro yow toward me / Thenne sayd the  
wulf to the lambe/ Haſt thou no shame ne drede  
to curse me / And the lambe sayd My lord with  
your leue / And the wulf sayd ageyne / Hit is  
not fyxe monethes paſſyd that thy fader dyd to  
me as moche / And the lambe ansuerd yet was  
I not at that tyme born / And the wulf said  
ageyne to hym / Thou haſt ete my fader / And  
the lambe ansuerd / I have no teeeth / Thenne  
said the wulf / thou arte wel lyke thy fader /  
and for his fyne and myſdede thou ſhalt deye /  
The wulf thenne toke the lambe and ete hym /  
This fable ſheweth that the euylle man retcheth  
not by what maner he may robbe and deſtroye  
the good and Innocēt man.

¶ The thyrd fable is of the rat / and of the  
frogge /

  
Now it be so / that as the rat went in  
pulgremage / he came by a Ryuer /  
and demaunded helpe of a frogge  
for to passe / and go over the  
water / And thenne the frogge  
bound the rats foote to her foote / and thus  
swymed vnto the myddes ouer the Ryuer / And  
as they were there the frogge stood styll / to  
thende that the rat shold be drowned / And in  
the meane whyle came a kyte vpon them / and  
bothe bare them with hym / This fable made  
Esope for a semylytude whiche is proufitable to  
many folkes / For he that thynketh evylle ageynſt  
good / the evil whiche he thynketh shall ones  
falle upon hym self.

¶ The fourth fable is of the dogge and the  
sheep



f the men chalengynge / whiche ever  
be sekynge occasion to doo some  
harme and dommage to the good /  
faith Esope suche a fable / Som-  
tyme was a dogge / whiche de-  
maunded of a sheep a loof of brede that she had  
borowed of hym / And the sheep ansuerd that  
neuer she had none of hym / The dogge made  
her to come before the Juge / And by cause the  
sheep denyed the dette / the dogge provyfed and  
broughte with hym fals wytnes / that is to wete  
the wulf / the mylan & the spaehawk / And  
whanne these wytnes shold be examyned and  
herd / the wulf sayd to the Juge / I am certayne  
& me remembreth wel / that the dogge lend to  
her a loof of brede / And the myllan went and  
sayd / the receyued hit presente my persone /  
And the sperowhawk said to the sheep / come  
hyder why denyest thou that whiche thou hast  
take and recyued / And thus was the poure sheep  
vaynquysshed ¶ And thenne the Juge com-  
maunded to her that she shold paye the dogge /  
wherefore

wherfore the fold awey before the wynter her  
flees and wulle for to paye that / that the nener  
had / and thus was the poure sheep despoylled /  
In siche maner done the euylle hongry peple  
which by theyr grete vntrouthe and malyce  
robben and despoillen the poure folke

¶ The fyfthe fable is of the dogge and of the  
pyece of flessh



e that defyreth to haue other mens  
goodes oft he loseth his owne  
good / whereof Esope reherceth to  
vs suche a fable / In tyme passed  
was a dogge that wente ouer a  
brydge / and held in his mouthe a pyece of  
fleshe / and as he passed ouer a brydge / he  
perceywed and sawe the shadowe of hym /  
and of his pyece of fleshe within the water /  
And he wenynge that it had be another pyece  
of fleshe / forthwith he thought to haue take  
it / And as he opened his mouthe / the pyece  
of fleshe fylle in to the water / and thus he lost  
it / Ryghte soo is of many / for whanne they  
thynde to robbe other / they lese theyr owne  
and propre good / wherfor for the loue of a vayn  
thyng men ought not to leue that whiche is  
certeyn.

C The vj fable is of the lyon and of the cowe /  
of the goote and of the sheep

**M**en sayen that it is not good to ete  
plommes with his lord / ne to the  
poure it is not good to have par-  
tage and dyuyfyon with hym which  
is ryche & myghty / wherof Esope  
reherceth suche a fable / The cowe / the gote &  
the sheep went ones a hūtyng & chase / with the  
lyon and toke a herte / And whanne they cake /  
[came] to haue theyr parte / the lyon sayd to  
them / My lordes I late you wete / that the fyrt  
part is myn by cause I am your lord / the seconf  
by cause / I am stronger than ye be / the thyrd /  
by cause I ranne more swifter than ye dyd / and  
who so ever toucheth the fourthe parte / he shall  
be myn mortal enemy / And thus he took for  
hym selfe alone the herte / And therfore this  
table techeth to al folk / that the poure ought  
not to hold felauship with the myghty / For  
the myghty man is neuer feythfull to the poure

¶ The seventh fable is of the theef and of  
the sonne.



O man is chaunged by nature but  
of an euyll man maye wel yssue  
and come a wers than hymself/  
wheroft Esope telleth suche a  
fable/ A theef held the feest of  
his weddyng/ And his neyghbours came there  
as the fest was holden and worshipped / and bare  
honour to the theef/ And as a wyse man sawe  
that the neyghbours of this theef were ioyeful  
and glad/ he sayd to them / Ye make joye &  
gladnes of that / wheroft ye sholde wepe/ take  
hede thenne to my wordes and vnderstond your  
ioye/ ¶ The sonne wolde ones be maryed / But  
alle the Nacions of the world were ageynst hym /  
& prayd Iupiter that he shold kepe the sonne  
fro weddyng / & Jupiter demaūded of them  
the cause why they wolde not haue hym to be  
wedded / the one of them said / Iupiter thou  
knowest wel / how ther is but one sonne & yet  
he brenneth vs al / & yf he be maryed & haue  
ony children / they shal destroye al kynnde / And  
this fable techeth vs that we ought not to be  
reioysched of euyll fellowship /

**C** The viij fable is of the wulf and of the crane



Ho so euer doth ony good to the euyll man he synneth as Esope faith / for of ony good which is don to the euils cometh no prouifit / wheroft Esope reherceth to vs fuche a fable / A wulf ete & deuoured a sheep of whos bones he had one in his throte which he coulde not haue out & fore it greued hym / thenne went the wulf & praid the crane that she wold draw oute of his throte the bone / & the crane put her nek in to his throte & drewe out the bone wherby the wulf was hole / **C** And the crane demaunded of hym to be payd of her salary **C** And the wulf answerd to her / Thou arte well vnconnyng & no good connyng / remembryng the good that I haue done to the / for whan thou haddeſt thy neck within my throte / yf I had wold / I might haue ete the / and thus it apiereth by the fable how no prouifitte cometh of ony good whiche is done to the euyle

**C** The ix fable is of the two bytches



It is not good to byleue what flaterers  
and euyll men faye / for by theyr  
swete wordes / they deceyue the  
good folke / whereof Esope re-  
herceth such a fable / This was a  
bytche which wold lyttre and be delyuerd of her  
lytyl dogges / and came to the hows of another  
bytche / & prayd her by swete and fayre wordes  
that she would lene to her a place for to lyttre  
her lytyll dogges / And this other lend to her /  
her bed and her hows wenynge to doo wel /  
And whan the bytche had lyttred her lytyl  
dogges / the good bytche sayd to the other / that  
it was tyme that she shold goo and departe oute  
of her hows And then the bytche and her young  
dogges ranne vpon the other / and boote and  
casted her oute of her owne hows / and thus for  
to have doo well / grete dommage cometh ofte  
therfore And ofte the good men lese theyr goodes  
by the deception and flaterye of the peruers and  
evylle folke /

**C** The tenth fable is of the man and of the serpent

**H**E that leneth and helpeth the euylle  
men / synneth / for after that men  
have doo to them some good /  
they hurte them afterward / For  
as men fayen comynly / yf ye  
kepe a man fro the galhows / he thalle never  
loue yow after / wherof Esope reherceth suche  
a fable / **C**A man was som tyme whiche sond a  
serpent within a Vyne / and for the grete wynter  
and frost the serpent was hard / and almos† dede  
for cold wherof the good man had pyte and toke  
and bare her in to his hows and leyd her before  
the fyre / and so moche he dyd that that she  
came ageyne in to her strengthe and vgyour /  
She beganne thynne to crye and whyftled about  
the hows and troubled the good wyt / and the  
children / wherfor this good man wold haue her  
oute of his hows / And whanne he thoughte to  
have take her she sprange after his neck for to  
have strangled hym / And thus hit is of the  
euyll folk whiche for the good done to them /  
they yeld ageyne euyll and deceyuen them whiche  
have had pyte on them / And also theyre felau-  
ship is not good ne vtyle /

**C** The xij fable is of the lyon and of the asse

F them whiche mocken other esope  
reherceth such a fable Ther was  
an asse which met with a lyon to  
whom he said my broder god  
faue the & the lyon shaked his  
hede and with grete payne he myght hold his  
courage / to have forth with deuoured hym /  
But the lyon sayd to hym self / It behoueth not  
that teethe soo noble and so fayre as myn be  
touchen not / ne byten suche a fowle beeſt / For  
he that is wyſe muſt not hurte the foole ne take  
hede to his wordes / but lete hym go for ſuche  
as he is

**C** The xij fable is of the two rats



Etter worthe is to lyue in pouerte  
surely / than to lyue rychely beyng  
euer in daunger / Wherof Esope  
telleth suche a fable / There were  
two rats wherof the one was grete  
and fatte / and held hym in the celer of a Ryche  
man And the other was poure and lene / **C** On  
a daye this grete and fat ratte wente to sporte  
hym in the feldes and mette by the way the  
poure rat / of the whiche he was receyued as  
well as he coude in his poure eauerne or hole /  
and gaf from of suche mete as he had / Thenne  
sayd the fatte ratte come thow wyth me / And  
I shalle gyue the wel other metes / He went  
with hym in to the toun / and enterd bothe  
into the celer of the ryche man / the whiche  
celer was full of alle goodes / And when they  
were within the grete rat presented and gaf to  
the poure rat of the delycious metes / saying thus  
to hym / Be mery and make good chere / and  
ete and drynke Joyously / **C** And as they were  
etynge / the bouteler of the place came in to the  
celer / & the grete rat fled anon in to his hole /

&amp;

& the poure rat wist not whyther he shold goo  
ne flee/ But hyd hym behynd the dore with  
grete fere and drede/ and the bouteler turned  
ageyne and sawe hym not/ And whan he was  
gone the fatte rat cam out of his cauerne or  
hole/ and called the poure ratte/ whiche yet  
was shakynge for fere/ and said to hym/ come  
hyder and be not aferd/ & ete as moche as thou  
wylt/ And the poure rat sayd to hym/ for  
goddes loue lete me go oute of this celer/ For I  
haue better ete some corne in the feldes and lyue  
surely/ than to be ever in this torment/ for thou  
arte here in grete doubte & lyuest not surely/  
And therfore hit is good to lyue pourely &  
surely For the poure lyueth more surely than  
the ryche

¶ The xiij fable is of the Egle and of the foxe



Ow the puyllant & myghty must  
doubte the feble Esop reherceth  
to vs suche a fable / Ther was an  
Egle whiche came ther as young  
foxes were / and took awey one of  
them / and gaf hit to his younge Egles to fede  
them with The foxe wente after hym & praid  
hym to restore and gyue hym ageyne his yong  
foxe / and the Egle said that he wold not / For he  
was ouer hym lord and maister / ¶ And thenne  
the foxe fulle of shrewdnes and malyce beganne  
to put to gyder grete habondaunce of straws  
round abouthe the tree / where vpon the egle and  
his yonge were in theyr nest / and kyndeled it  
with fyre / ¶ And whan the smoke and the  
flambe began to ryse vpward / the Egle ferd-  
fulle and doubtyng the dethe of her lytyle egles  
restored ageyne the younge foxe to his moder  
¶ This fable sheweth vs / how the myghty men  
oughte not to lette in ony thynge the small folke /  
For the lytyle ryght ofte may lette and trouble  
the grete

¶ The xiiij fable is of the Egle whiche bare a  
nutte in his becke and of the rauen

**H**e that is sure and wel garnysshed yet  
by fals cunceyll may be betrayed /  
wherof Esop telleth suche a fable /  
¶ An Egle was somtyme vpon a  
tree / whiche held with his bylle  
a nutte / whiche he coulde not breke / the rauen  
came to hym / and sayd / Thow shalt neuer  
breke it / tylle thow fleest as hyghe as thou  
mayst / and thenne late it falle vpon the stones /  
And the Egle beganne to flyhe and lete fall his  
proye / and thus he lost his notte / ¶ And thus  
many one ben deceyued thorughe fals cunceylle /  
and by the fals tongue of other

C The xv fable is of the rauen and of the foxe



Hey that be glad and Joyefull of the  
prayfynge of flaterers oftyme re-  
penten them therof wherof Esop  
reherceth to us suche a fable / A  
rauen whiche was vpon a tree /  
and held with his bylle a chese / the whiche  
chese the fox desyred moche to haue / wherfore  
the foxe wente and preyfed hym by suche wordes  
as folowen / O gentyll rauen thou art the fayrest  
byrd of alle other byrdes / For thy fethers ben so  
fayr so bright and so resplendysshyne / and can  
also so wel synge / yf thou haddeſt the voys clere  
and small thou sholdeſt be the moost happy of  
al other byrdes / And the foole whiche herd the  
flatteryinge wordes of the foxe beganne to open  
his bylle for to synge / And then the chese fylle  
to the grounde / and the fox toke and ete hit /  
And whan the rauen sawe that for his vayn  
glorye he was deceyued wexed hevy and forow-  
full / and repented hym of that he had byleued  
the foxe / And this fable techeth vs / how men  
ought not to be glad ne take reioysshyne in the  
wordes of caytyf folke / ne also to leue flattery ne  
vayn glory

¶ The xvi fable is of the Lyon / of the wylde  
bore / of the bole & of the asse



hanne a man hath lost his dignyte or  
offyce/ he muste leue his fyrist audu-  
cyte or hardyneſſ/ to thende/ that  
he be not iniuryed and mocqued of  
euery one / wherof Eſope sheweth  
vnto ſuche a fable / There was a lyon whiche  
in his yongthe was fyers and moche outragyous /  
¶ And when he was come to his old age / there  
came to hym a wyldbore / whiche with his  
teeth rent and barſt a grete pyece of his body  
and auenged upon hym of the wrong the lyon  
had doo to hym before that tyme / ¶ After  
came to hym the boole whiche smote and hurted  
hym with his hornes / And an asſe came there /  
whiche smote hym in the forhede with his feete  
by maner of vyndycacion / And thenne the poure  
Lyon beganne to wepe fayenge within hym ſelf  
in this manere / When I was yonge and uertuous  
euery one doubted and fered me / and now that  
I am old and feble / and nyghe to my dethe /  
none is that ſetteth ne holdeth ought by me /  
but of euery one I am fetten aback / I haue lost  
alle

alle good and worship / and therfore this fable  
admonesteth many one whiche ben enhauuced  
in dygnyte and worship shewinge to them / how  
they must be meke and humble / For he that  
geteth and acquyreth no frendes ought to be  
doubtous to falle in suche caas and in suche  
peryl

C The xviij fable is of the asse and of the  
yong dogge

---



**N**one ought to entermete hym of that  
what he can not do wheroft Esope  
recyted siche a fable / Of an asse  
whiche was in the hows of a lord /  
whiche lord had a lytyle dogge /  
whiche he loued wel / and gaf hym mete and  
ete vpon his table / And the lytyle dogge loked  
and chered / and lepte vpon his gowne / And to  
alle them that were in the hows he made chere /  
wherfor

wherfor the asse was enuyous and sayd in hym self / yf my lord and his meyny loue this myfchaunt beste by cause that he chereth and maketh feste to euery body / by gretter reason they ought to loue me vf I make chere to them / Thenne sayd he in hym self / Fro henforth I shall take my disporte and thall make Joye and playe with my lord / and wyth his meyny / And ones as the asse was in this thoughte and ymagynacion / hit happed that he sawe his lord whyche entryd in to his hows / the asse beganne thenne to daunse and to make feest and songe with his swete voys / and approched hym self toward his lord & went & lepte vpon his sholders / and beganne to kyse and to lykke hym / The lord thenne beganne to crye oute with a hyghe voys and sayd / lete this fowl and payllard / whiche hurteth and byteth me sore / be bete and putt awey / The lordes seruautes thenne toke anone grete stiaues / and beganne to smyte vpon the poure asse / and so sore corryged and bete hym / that after he had no luste ne courage to daunse / ne make to nonne chere ne feste / and therfore none ought to entermete hym self for to doo a thyng / whiche as for hym impossyble is to be done / For the vnwyse displefeth there / where as he supposeth to please

¶ The xvij fable is of the lyon and of  
the rat /



He myghte and puissant must par-  
donne and forgyue to the lytyll  
and feble / and ought to kepe hym  
fro al euylle / For oftyme the lytyll  
may wel gyue ayde and help to  
the grete / wherof Esope reherceth to vs suche a  
fable Of a lyon whiche slepte in a forest and the  
rats desportyd and playd aboue hym / It happed  
that the rat wente vpon the lyon / wherfore the  
lyon awoke / and within his clawes or ongles he  
tooke the rat / ¶ And whanne the rat sawe hym  
thus taken & hold sayd thus to the lyon / My  
lord pardonne me / For of my deth noughe ye  
shalle wynne / For I supposyd not to haue done  
to yow ony harme ne displayfyre / ¶ Thenne  
thought the lyon in hym self that no worship ne  
glorye it were to put it to dethe / wherfor he  
graunted his pardonne and lete hym go within  
a lytyll whyle / After this it happed so that the  
same lyon was take at a grete trappe / and as he  
sawe hym thus caught and taken / he beganne  
to crye and make forowe / and then whan the  
rat

rat herd hym crye / he approched hym & de-  
maunded of hym wherfor he cryed / And the  
lyon ansuerd to hym / Seest thou not how I am  
take & bound with this gynne / Thenne sayd the  
ratte to hym / My lord I wylle not be vnkynde /  
but euer I shal remembre the grace whiche thou  
haſt done to me / And if I can I ſhall now helpe  
the / The ratte beganne thenne to byte the lace  
or cord / and ſo long he knawed it that the lace  
brake / And thus the lyon eſcaped / ¶ Therfore  
this fable techeth vs how that a man myghty and  
puyſſant ought not to dysprayſe the lytyll / For  
ſomtyme he that can no body hurte ne lette may  
at a nede gyue help and ayde to the grete

**C** The xix fable is of the mylan whiche was  
feke and of his moder



E that euer doth euylle ought not  
to suppose ne haue no trust that  
his prayer at his nede shalle be  
herd / Of the whiche thynge Esope  
sheweth to us suche a fable / Of  
a mylan whiche was feke / so moche that he had  
no truste to recouer his helthe / And as he sawe  
hym so vexed with feblenes / he prayd his moder  
that she shold praye vnto the goddes for hym / And his moder ansuerd to hym / My sone thou  
haft so gretely offendyd and blasphemyd the  
goddes that now they wol auenge them on the /  
For thou preyst not them by pyte ne by loue /  
but for dolour and drede / For he whiche ledeth  
euylle lyf / and that in his euylle delynge is ob-  
stynate / ought not to haue hope to be delyuered  
of his euyll / For whan one is fall into extremyte  
of his sekenes / thenne is the tyme come that he  
must be payed of his Werkes and dedes / For he  
that offendeth other in his prospertyte / whan he  
falleth in to aduersytyte / he fyndeth no frendes /

**C** The xx fable maketh mencion of the swalowe /  
and other byrdes



E that byleueth not good cunceyll /  
may not fayll to be euylle coun-  
ceyld / wherof Esop reherceth  
to vs fuehe a fable / Of a plowgh  
man / whiche sowed lynseed / and  
the swalowe seyng that of the same lynseed men  
myght make nettes and gynnes / wente and fayd  
to al other byrdes / Come with me ye al & let  
vs plucke vp al this / For yf we leue hit growe /  
the labourer shal mowe make therof gunnes and  
nettes for to take vs al / Alle the byrdes desprayfed  
his cunceyl / **C** And thenne as the swalowe  
sawe this / he wente and herberowed her in the  
plowgh mans hows / **C** And whanne the flaxe  
was growen and pulled vp / the labourer made  
grynnes and nettes to take byrdes / wherwith he  
took euery day many other byrdes / and brought  
them to his hows / to the whiche byrdes the  
swalowe thenne fayd / I told yow wel / what  
that shold happe therof / wherfore men ought  
not to desprayfe good cuncylyle / For he that is  
euyl aduyfed and not wel cunceyled shalle haue  
muche paine

**C** Here syngsshed the syrst booke of Esop /

¶ Here foloweth the prohemye of the second book  
of fables of esope / man wyse subtyle and  
Engenyous



le maner of fables ben found for to shewe al maner of folk / what maner of thyng they ought to ensyewe and folowe / ¶ And also what maner of thyng they must and ought to leue and flee / for fable is as moche to seye in poeterye / as wordes in theologie / ¶ And therfor I shalle wryten fables for to shewe the good condycions of the good men / for the lawe hath be gyuen for the trespassers or myſdoers / And by cause the good ond Juste be not subget to the lawe as we fynde and rede of alle the Athenyens / the whiche lyued after the lawe of Kynde / And also they lyued at theyr lyberte / but by theyre wylle wold haue demaunded a kynge for to punyſhe alle the euyll / but by cause they were not customed to be refourmed ne chaſtysed / whan ony of them was corrected / and punyſhed / they were gretely troubled / whan theyr newe kynge made Justyce / For by cause that before that tyme they had neuer

neuer be vnder no mans subjection / and was  
grete charge to them to be in seruytude / wher-  
fore they were sorowful that euer they had de-  
maunded ony thynge / ageynst the whiche esope  
reherceth suche a fable whiche is the syrf and  
formest of this second book

**C** The syrste fable is of the frogges and of  
Jupyter

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**N**O thyng is so good as to lyue Justly  
and at lyberte For fredome and  
lyberte is better than ony gold or  
syluer / wheroft Esope reherceth  
to vs suche a fable / There were  
frogges whiche were in dyches and pondes at  
theyre lyberte / they alle to gyder of one assente  
& of one wylle maade a request to Jupiter that  
he wold gyue them a kynge / And Jupyter be-  
ganne

ganne therof to merueylle / And for theyr kyng  
he casted to them a grete pyece of wood / whiche  
maade a grete sowne and noyse in the water /  
wherof alle the frogges had grete drede and  
fered moche / And after they approached to theyr  
kyng for to make obeyssance vnto hym / ¶ And  
whanne they perceyued that hit was but a pyece  
of wood / they torned ageyne to Jupiter prayenge  
hym swetely that he wold gyue to them another  
kyng / And Jupiter gaf to them the Heron for  
to be theyr kynge / And then the Heron beganne  
to entre in to the water / and ete them one after  
other / And whanne the frogges sawe that theyr  
kyng destroyed / and ete them thus/ they beganne  
tendyrly to wepe / fayeng in this manere to the  
god Jupiter / Ryght hyghe and ryght myghte  
god Jupiter please the to delyuere vs fro the  
throte of this dragon and fals tyraunt which eteth  
vs the one after another / And he sayd to them /  
the kynge whiche ye haue demounded shalle be  
your mayster / For whan men haue that / which  
men oughte to haue / they ought to be ioyful  
and glad And he that hath lyberte ought to kepe  
hit wel / For nothyng is better than lyberte / For  
lyberte shold not be wel sold for alle the gold  
and syluer of all the world

¶ The second fable is of the Columbes or douues  
of the kyte and of the sperehawke



Ho that putte and submytteth hym  
self vnder the faue gard or protec-  
tion of the euylle / thou oughtest  
to wete & knowe / that whan he  
asketh & demanded ayde & helpe /  
he geteth none / ¶ Wherof Esope reherceth to  
vs fuche a fable / Of the douues whiche  
demaundered a sperehawke for to be theyr kynge /  
for to kepe them fro the kyte or mylan / And  
whanne the sperehawke was maade kynge ouer  
them / he beganne to deuoure them / the whiche  
columbes or douues sayd amonge them / that  
better it were to them to suffre of the kyte than  
to be vnder the subjection of the sperehawke /  
& to be martyred as we be / but therof we be  
wel worthy / For we oure self ben cause of this  
meschyef / And therfore whanne men done ony  
thyng / men ought well to loke and confydere  
thende of hit / For he dothe prudently and  
wyfely whiche taketh good hede to the ende

**C** The thyrde fable is of the theef and of the  
dogge



Hanne that one gyueth ony thyng /  
men ought wel to take hede / to  
what ende hit is gyuen / wheroft  
Efope reherceth suche a fable /  
Of a theef which came on a nygt  
within a mans hows for to haue robbed hym /  
And the good mans dogge beganne to bark at  
hym / And thenne the theef casted at hym a  
pyece of brede / And the dogge sayd to hym /  
thow casteſt not this brede for no good wylle /  
but only to the ende / that I hold my pees / to  
thende that thow mayſt robbe my mayſter / and  
therfore hit were not good for me / that for a  
morsell of brede / I thold leſe my lyf / wherfore  
goo fro hens / or els I thalle anone awake my  
mayſter and alle his meyne / The dogge theynne  
beganne to bark / and the theef beganne to flee /  
And thus by couetyſe many one haue oftyme  
receyued grete yestes / the whiche haue been  
cause of theyr dethe and to leſe theyre heedes /

**C** Wherfore

¶ Wherfore hit is good to confydere and loke  
wel / to what entencion the yeft in gyuen / to  
thende that none may be betrayd thurgh yeftes /  
ne that by ony yeftes none maketh some trayfon  
ageynſt his mayſter or lord

## C The fourthe makeith mencyon of the sowe and of the wulf



T is not good to byleue all suche  
thynges as men may here / wherof  
Esope fayeth suche a fable / Of a  
wulf whiche came toward a sowe  
whiche wepte and made sorowe  
for the grete Payne that the felte / by cause the  
wold make her young pygges / And the wulf  
came to her sayeng / My futter make thy yonge  
pygges surely / for ioyously and with good wylle /  
I thalle helpe & serue the / And the sowe sayd  
thenne to hym / go forth on thy waye / for I  
haue no nede ne myster of suche a seruaunt / For  
as longe as thou shalt stonde here I shal not  
delyuere me of my charge / For other thyng  
thou defyrest not / than to haue and ete them /  
The wulf then wente / and the sowe was anone  
delyuered of her pygges / For yf she had bylenyd  
hym she had done a forowful byrthe / And thus  
he that folysshly byleueth it happeth to hym

C The fyfthe fable maketh meneyon of the  
montayn whiche shoke



Yght so it happeth / that he that  
menaceth hath drede and is ferd-  
ful / wheroft Esope reherceth to vs  
suche a fable Of a hylle whiche  
beganne to tremble and shake by  
cause of the molle whiche delued hit / And whanne  
the folke sawe that the erthe beganne thus to  
shake / they were sore aferd and dredeful / and  
durft not wel come ne approche the hylle / But  
after whanne they were come nyghe to the mon-  
tayne / & knewe how the molle caused this hylle  
shakynge / theyr doubte and drede were con-  
uerted vnto Joye / and beganne alle to lawhe /  
And therfore men ought not to doubte al folk  
which ben of grete wordes and menaces / For  
some menacen that haue grete doubte

**C** The vi fable is of the wulf and of the lambe



He byrth causeth no so moche to gete  
 some frendes / as doth the good-  
 nes / wherof Esope reherceth to vs  
 suche a fable / Of a wulf whiche  
 fawe a lambe among a grete herd  
 of gootes / the whiche lambe sawked a gote /  
 And the wulf wente and sayd to hym / this gote  
 is not thy moder / goo and seke her at the Mont-  
 tayn / for shalle nourysfhe the more swetely  
 and more tendyly than this gote shalle / And  
 the lambe ansuerd to hym / This goote nourysfheth  
 me istede of my moder / For the leneth to me  
 her pappes soner than to ony of her own chil-  
 dren / And yet more / hit is better for me to be  
 here with these gootes than to departe fro hens /  
 and to falle in to thy throte for to be deououred /  
 And therfore he is a foole whiche leueth fredome  
 or surete / For to put hym self in grete perylle  
 and daunger of dethe / For better is to lyue  
 surely and rudely in fewrte than swetely in peryll  
 & daunger

C The vii fable speketh of the old dogge and  
of his mayster

**M**en ought not to dysprayse the aun-  
cyent ne to putte a bak / For yf  
thow be yonge / thow oughte to  
desyre to come to old age or aun-  
cyente / and also thow ouȝtest to  
loue and prayse the fayttes or dedes whiche they  
haue done in theyr yongthe / wherof Esop re-  
herceth to vs suche a fable / Of a lord whiche  
had a dogge / the whiche dogge had be in his  
yonghe of good kynde / For ye wote wel / that  
of kynde the dogges chacen and hunten in theyr  
yongthe / and haue grete luste to renne and take  
the wyld beefestes / whan thenne this dogge was  
come to old age / and that he myght no more  
renne / It happeth ones that he lete scape and go  
fro hym an hare / wherfore his mayster was forow-  
full and angry / and by grete wrathe beganne to  
bete hym / The dogge sayd thenne to hym / My  
mayster / of good seruyse thow yeldest to me  
euylle gwerdone & reward / For in my yonge  
age I serued the ful wel / And now that I am  
comen to myn old age / thow betest and settest  
me

me a bak / hane memorye how in myn yong  
age / I was stronge and lusty / And how I made  
grete outrages and effors / the whiche caused my  
yongthe / And now when I am bycome old and  
feble thou settest nought of me / ¶ This fable  
techeth that who so euer doth ony good in his  
yongthe / in his aunciente and old age he shalle  
not contynue in the vertues which he posseſſed  
in his yong age

¶ The viij fable is of the hares and of the  
frogges

**M**en say conynly that after that the  
tyme goth / so must folke go / For  
yf thou makest destinction of the  
tyme thou shalt wel accord the  
Scryptures / wherof Esope reher-  
ceth to vs suche a fable / And sayth thus / that  
he whiche beholdeth the euylle of other / must  
haue pacyence of the euylle that maye come  
vpon hym / For somtyme as a hunter chaced  
thurgh the feldes and woodes / the hares beganne  
to flee for fere And as they ranne / they adressyd  
them in to a medowe fulle of frogges / ¶ And  
whanne the frogges herd the hares renne they  
beganne also to flee and to renne fast / And thenne  
a hare whiche perceyued them so ferdfull sayd  
to alle his felawes / Lete us no more be dredeful  
ne doubtuous / for we be not alone that haue had  
drede / For alle the frogges ben in doubte / and  
haue fere and drede as we haue / Therfore we  
ought not to despayre / but haue trust and hope  
to lyue / And yf somme aduersyte cometh vpon  
us / we must bere it pacyently / For ones the  
tyme

tyme shalle come that we shalle be oute of payne  
and oute of all drede / Therfore in the vnhappy  
and Infortunat tyme men ought not to be def-  
payred / but oughte euer to be in good hope to  
haue ones better in tyme of prosperyte / For after  
grete werre cometh good pees / And after the  
rayne cometh the fair weder

¶ The ix fable maketh mencyon of the wulf  
and of the kydde



Ood Children ought to obserue and  
kepe euer the comaundements of  
theyr good parents and frendes /  
wherof Esope reciteth to vs suche  
a fable / Of a gote whiche had  
made her yonge kyde / and honger toke her foo  
that she wold haue gone to the feldes for to ete  
some grasse / wherfore she sayd to her kyd / My  
child / beware wel / that yf the wulf come hyder  
to ete the / that thou opene not the dore to hym  
¶ And whanne the gote was gone to the feldes /  
came the wulf to the dore / And faynyng the  
gotes voyce sayd to the kydde / My child opene  
to me the dore / And thenne the kydde ansuerd to  
hym / goo hens euylle and fals besfe / For well  
I see the thurgh that hole / But for to haue me  
thow fayneft the voyce of my moder / ¶ And  
therfore I shalle kepe me well fro openyng of  
ony dore of this hows / And thus the good chil-  
dren ought euer to kepe wel / and put in theyr  
hert & memory the doctryne and the techyng of  
theyr parentes / For many one is vndone and lost  
for faulfe of obeyence

¶ The tenth fable is of the good man and  
of the serpente

**H**E that ought not to be alswerd that applyketh and setteth hym to doo somme other eny euyll / wherof efope reherceth fuche a fable / Of a serpent / whiche wente & came into the hows of a poure man / which serpent lyued of that whiche felle fro the poure mans table / For the whiche thynge happed a grete fortune to this poure man and bycame moche ryche / But on a daye this man was angry ageynste the serpent / and took a grete staf / and smote at hym / and gretely hurted him / wherfore the serpente wente oute of his hous And therin he came neuer ageyne / And within a lytyll whyle after this / this man retourned and felle ageyne in to grete pouerte / And thenne he knewe that by the fortune of the Serpent he was bycome ryche / and repented hym moche of that he smote the serpent / And thenne this poure man wente and hübled hym before the serpent fayenge to hym / I praye the that thou wylt par-donne me of thoffense that I have done to the /

¶ And

¶ And thenne sayd the serpente to the poure  
man / Syth thou repenteſt the of thy myſdede /  
I pardonne and forgyue it to the / But as longe as  
I ſhalle be on lyue / I ſhalle remember me of thy  
malyce / For as thou hurtedſt me ones / thou  
maefſt as wel hurte me another tyme / For the  
wounde that thou madefſt to me / may not for-  
gete the euylle whiche thou haſt done to me  
wherfore he that was ones euylle / ſhalle euer be  
preſumed & holden for euylle / And therfore  
men ought to preſume ouer hym / by whome  
they receyue ſomme dommage and not haue ſuf-  
peſte theyr good and trewe frendes

C The xi fable is of the herte / of the sheep &  
of the wulf



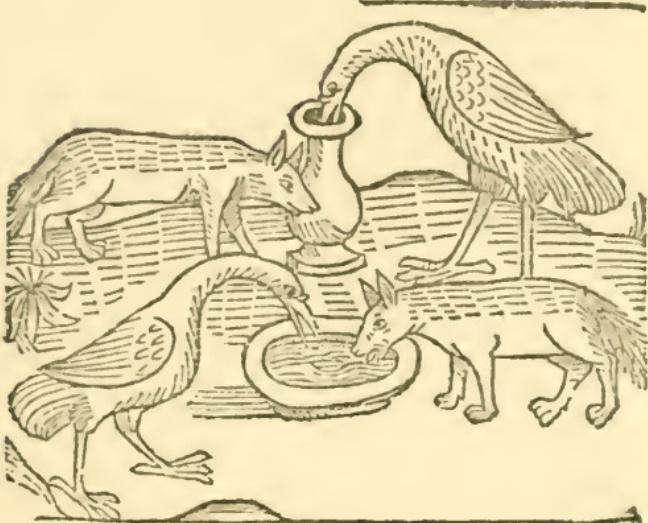
He thyng which is promyfed by  
force & for drede is not to be  
hold/ wherof esope reherceth suche  
a fable of a hert which in the  
presence of a wulf demaūded of  
a sheep that she shold paye a busshel of corn /  
And the wulf commaūded to the sheep to paye  
hit / And whanne the day of payment was come  
the herte came and demaunded of the sheep his  
corn And the sheep sayd to hym/ the conenaunces  
and paectyons made by drede and force oughte  
not to be holden / For it was force to me beyng  
to fore the wulf to promyfte & graunte to gyue  
to the that whiche thou neuer lenest to me / And  
therfor thow shalt haue ryght nought of me /  
wherfore somtyme it is good to make promise  
of some thyng for to eschewe gretter dommage  
or losse / For the thyngs whiche are done by  
force haue none fydelite

**C** The xij fable is of the balled man /  
and of the flye /



F a lytyl euylle may wel come a gretter / Wherof Esope recyteth suche a fable / Of a flye / whiche pryked a man vpon his bald hede / And whanne he wold have smyte her / she flewgh awey / And thus he smote hym self / wherof the fly beganne to lawhe / And the bald man sayd to her / Ha a euylle beeſt thou demaundest wel thy dethe / yf I smote my ſelf wherof thou lawhest and mocqueſt me / But yf I had hytte the / thou haddest be therof ſlayne / And therfore men ſayen comynly that of the euylle of other / men ought not to lawhe ne ſcorne / But the Iniuryous mocquen and ſcornen the world / and geteth many enemyes / For the whiche cauſe oftyme it happeth that of a fewe wordes euyll ſette / cometh a grete noyſe and daunger

**C** The xijij fable is of the foxe and of the storke



**H**ow oughtest not to doo to other  
that whiche thou woldest not that  
men shold doo to the / wherof  
Esop reherceth to vs such a  
fable / Of a foxe whiche conueyed  
a storke to souper / And the foxe put the mete  
vpon a trauncher / the whiche mete the storke  
myght not ete / wherof she tooke & had grete  
displayfaunce / & wente & departed oute of the  
foxes

foxes hows al hungry and wente geyne to her  
lodgys / and by cause that the foxe had thus  
begyled her / she bythoughte in her self / how  
she myght begyle the Foxe / For as men saye /  
it is meryte to begyle the begylers / wherfore the  
storke prayd the foxe to come and soupe with  
her / and put his mete within a glas / And  
whanne the foxe wold haue eten / he myght not  
come ther by / but only he lycked the glas / by  
cause he cowde not reche to the mete with his  
mouthe / And thenne he knewe wel that he was  
deceyued / And thenne the storke sayd to hym /  
Take of fuche goodes as thou gauest to me /  
And the poure foxe ryght shameful departed fro  
thens / And with the staf whiche he had made  
he was bete And therfore he that begyleth other /  
is oftyme begyled hym self /

C The xiiij fable is of the wulf and of the  
dede mans hede



Any one ben whiche haue grete  
worship and glorye / but noo pru-  
dence / ne noo Wysedom they haue  
in them wherof Esope reherceth  
suche a fable / Of a wulf which  
found a dede mans hede / the whiche he torned  
vp so doun with his foote / And sayd / Ha a  
how fayr hast thou be and playfaunt / And now  
thow haft in the neyther wytte / ne beaute / &  
yet thow arte withoute voys and withoute ony  
thought / and therfore men ought not only to  
behold the beautte and fayrenesse of the body /  
but only the goodnes of the courage / For som-  
tyme men gyuen glorye and worship to some /  
whiche haue not deferuyd to haue hit /

**C** The xv fable is of the Jaye and of the pecok



One ought to were and putte on  
hym the gowne of other / wherof  
Esope reherceth to vs suche a  
fable Of a Jaye full of vayne  
glory / whiche tooke and putte  
on hym the fethers of a pecok / and with them  
he a[d]ourned / and arayed hym self well / And  
whanne he was wel dresyd and arayed / by his  
oultrecuydaunce or ouerwenyng wold haue gone  
and conuersed amonge the pecoks / and des-  
prayfed alle his felawes / And whanne the pecokes  
knewe that he was not of theyr kynd / they anone  
plucked of alle his fethers / and smote and bete  
hym by suche maner / that no fethers abode  
vpon hym / And he fledde away al naked and  
bare /

**C** And thenne whanne his felawes sawe  
hym / they sayd to hym / What gallaunt come  
hyther / where ben thy fayre fethers / whiche  
thow haddest but late a gone / Hast thow no  
shame ne vergoyne to come in oure companye /

And thenne alle the byrdes cam vpon hym /  
and smote & bete hym / fayenge thus to hym /  
yf

yf thou haddest be content of thyn owne vely-  
mentes / thow hadest not come to this vylony /  
Ther for hit appereth that hit is not good to  
were another mans gowne / For suche weren  
fayre gownes and fayr gyrdels of gold that haue  
theyr teeth cold at home

¶ The xvij fable is of the mule and of the flye.



Omme maken gretemenaces / whiche  
haue no myghte / ¶ Wherof Esope  
reherceth fuche a fable / ¶ Of a  
carter / whiche ladde a Charyot  
or carte / whiche a Mule drewe  
forthe / And by cause the Mule wente not fast  
ynough / the flye sayd to the Mule / Ha a payllart  
Mule / why goost thou not faster / I shalle so  
egrely pryke the / that I shalle make the go  
lyghtely / ¶ And the Mule answered to the  
flye / God kepe and preserue the mone for the  
wolues / For I haue ne grete drede ne fere of  
the / But I drede and doubte sore my mayster /  
whiche is vpon me / whiche confrayneth me to  
fulfylle his wylle / ¶ And more I oughte to  
drede and doubte hym more / than the / whiche  
arte nought / and of no valewe ne myght /  
¶ And thus men ought not to gette by ne  
double them / whiche haue no myght ne that  
ben of no valewe

¶ The xvij fable is of the ante and the flye.

O make boost and auauntynge is but  
vayne glorie and folye / wherof  
Esop recyteth suche a fable / Of  
the ante or formyee and of the  
flye / whiche stryued to gyder /  
for to wete whiche was the most noble of  
them bothe / & the flye sayd to the formyee /  
Come hyder formyee / wylt thou compare thy  
self to me that dwelle in the kynges places and  
palays / and ete and drynke at theyr table / And  
also I kyssle bothe kynge and quene / and the  
most fayre maydens / and thou poure and myf-  
chaunt beest thou arte euer within the erthe /  
And the formyee ansuerd to the flye / Now  
knowe I wel thy vanyte and folye / ¶ For thou  
auaunteſt the of that wheroſt thou ſholeſt deſ-  
prayſe the /

For fro alle places where as thou goost or  
flyest / thou arte hated chaced and put oute / and  
lyuest in grete daunger / for affone as the wynter  
ſhalle come thou ſhalt deye / And I ſhal abyde  
on lyue alone within my chamber or hole /  
where as I drynke and ete at my playſyr / For  
the

the wynter shalle not forgyue to the thy myf-  
dede / but he shalle flee the / ¶ And thus he  
that wylle mocque or despreyse somme other /  
he ougt fyrst to loke and behold on hym self  
wel / For men fayn comynly / who that be-  
holdeth in the glas / well he feeth hym self /  
¶ And who seeth hym self / wel he knoweth hym  
self / And who that knowith hym self / lytel he  
preyfeth hym self / ¶ And who that preyfeth  
hym self lytyll / he is ful wyse and sage.

**C** The xviiiij fable is of the wulf / of the foxe /  
and of the ape

**H**E that ones falleth in to somme  
euylle saytte or dede / he thalle  
euer lyue with defhonour and in  
suspcion / of the peple / **C** And  
how be it that by aduenture he  
purposed to doo somme prouffitable thynge to  
somme other / yet he shold not be trusted ne  
byleued / wherof Esope reherceth to vs suche a  
fable / Of a wulf whiche maade the foxe to be  
cyted before the Ape / **C** And the wulf sayd  
that the foxe was but a theef and a payllart and  
a knaue of poure folke / And the foxe sayd that  
he lyed / and that he was a good and trewe man /  
And that he dyde moche good /

**C** And thenne the Ape whiche was sette as  
a Juge / gaf suche a sentence / and sayd to the  
wulf / Come hyther / thou hast not lost al that  
whiche thou demaundest / **C** And thou Foxe  
I beleue wel that thou hast vsurped and robbed  
som thynge / howe be it / that thou denyest hit  
in Justyee / But for as moche that pees may be  
bytwexe yow bothe / ye thalle parte to gyder  
your

your good / to thende / that none of yow haue  
no hole parte / For he that is wonte and acus-  
tomed to robbe and gnawe / with grete Payne he  
may absteyne hym self fro hit / For a begyler  
wylle euer begyle other / ¶ And by cause that  
the ape felte them bothe gulty and suspycious  
made theyr dyfference to be acorded / and parted  
half by half / For they that ben customed to doo  
ony frawde or falphede / shall euer lyue rygte  
heuyly and in suspycon

¶ The xix fable is of the man and of the  
wesel

**M**En ought wel to loke and behold the courage & thought of hym / whiche dothe good / and the ende / wherfor he dothe hit / wheroft Esope reherceth suche a fable / Of a man whiche tooke a wesell / the whiche chaced after the ratten wythynne his hows / ¶ And after whanne he had taken her / he wold haue kylled her / ¶ And whanne the poure Weselle sawe the wrathe and furour of her mayster / she cryed to hym / mercy / saynege thus / My lord I re quyre and praye the / that thou wylt pardon me / and that thou wylt reward me of the grete seruyse whiche I haue done to the / For euer I haue chaced the rats oute of thy hows /

¶ And the man sayd to her / thou dydest not that for the loue of me / but only thou hast done it for to fyll thy bely / For yf thou haddest done it for the loue of me / I shold haue pardonne to the / ¶ And by cause that thou dydest not for to serue me / but for to lette and adōmage me / For that the ratten myght not ete / thou bareſt it

it awey / And soo bycause / that thou arte wexed  
fatte of myne owne brede / thou must rendre  
and geue to me alle the fatnesse / whiche thou  
haft conquered and gotten here / For he that  
robbeth shall be robbed / Juxta illud / pellatores  
pillabuntur / For hit suffyseth not to doo wel /  
but men must haue good wylle and good enten-  
cion for to do hit / For an almesse that is done  
for vayne glorye / is not merited / but dismeryted /  
wherfore I shal not pardonne the / but incon-  
tynent and withoute taryenge thou shalt deye /  
For by cause that thou haft deseruyd no mercy /  
thow shalt now be putte to dethe

**C** The xx fable maketh mencion of the Oxe / and  
of the frogge / whiche wold haue compared  
her to hym



He poure ought not to compare hym  
self to hym which is ryche and  
myghty / As sayth this fable of a  
frogge / whiche was in a medowe /  
when she aspyed and sawe an oxe  
whiche pastured / She wold make her self as grete  
and as myghty as the oxe / and by her grete  
pryde she beganne to swelle ageynste the oxe /  
And denaunded of his children yf she was not  
as grete as the oxe and as myghty / And theyr  
children ansuerd and sayd nay moder / For to  
loke and behold on the oxe / it semeth of yow to  
be nothyng / And thenne the frogge beganne  
more to swelle / **C** And when the oxe sawe her  
pryde / he thradde and thrested her with his fote /  
and brake her bely / Therfore hit is not good to  
the poure to compare hym self to the ryche /  
Wherfore men sayn comynly / Swelle not thy  
self / to thende that thou breste not

**C** Here sonysshed the second booke of Gzope /

¶ Here begyneth the thyrdde booke of the subtyle  
fables of Esope / wherof the fyrsyte maketh  
mencion / of the Lyon / & of the pastour or  
herdman

 He myghty and puissant oughte not  
to be slowfull of the benefetes  
done to them by the lytyl and  
smalle And oughte not also to for-  
gete them / but that they may be  
rewarded of them / ¶ And this fable approueth  
esope & sheweth vnto vs / of a lyon whiche ranne  
after a beest / and as he ranne / a thorne entred  
into his foote / whiche hurted and greued hym  
gretely / wherfore he mught no ferther goo /  
but as wel as he cowde he came to a shepeherd  
whiche kepte his sheep and beganne to flatere  
with his taylle shewynge to hym hys foote / whiche  
was fore hurted and wounded / The shepherd  
was in grete drede and casted before the lyon  
one of his sheep / But the lyon demaunded no  
mete of hym / For more he desyred to be  
medycyned and made hole of his foote / ¶ And  
after whenne the shepherde sawe the wounde / he  
with

with a nydle subtylly drewe oute of his foote the  
thorne / and had oute of the wound alle the  
roten fleshe / and enoynted hit with swete oyne-  
ments / ¶ And anone the lyon was hole / And  
for to haue rendryd graces and thankys to the  
shepherd or pastour the lyon kytised his handes /  
And after he retorneid ageyn in to the hyest of  
the woode / And within a lytel whyle after it  
happed that this lyon was taken and conneyed  
to the Cyte of Rome and was put amonge the  
other bestes for to deuoure the mysdoers / Now  
it befelle that the sayd shepherd commyseid a  
crymynous dede / wherfore he was condempned  
to be deuoured by these bestes / And ryght so as  
he was cast among them the lyon knewe hym /  
and beganne to behold on hym / and made to  
hym chere and lykked hym with his tongue /  
And preferued and kepte hym from alle the  
other bestes / Thenne knewe the shepherd that  
it was the lyon whiche he maade hole / And  
that he wold thenne haue recompensed hym of  
the good whiche he had done to hym / wherof  
alle the Romayns were all wonderly abafshed /  
And wold knowe the cause of hit And the  
shepherd sayd to them as aboue is sayd /  
¶ And whanne they knewe the cause / they  
gaf leue to the sheepherd / to goo home and  
fente ageyne the lyon in to the foreft / And  
therfore

therfore this is notary and trewe that al maner  
of folke ought to rendre and gyue thankyngeſ  
grace and mercye to theyr good doers / For  
flowfulnes is a synne / whiche is moche display-  
faunt to god

**C**The second fable is of the lyon and of the hors



che one ought to eschewe dyfflymyng / fornone onȝt to were on hym  
the skyn of the wulf / but that he  
wyll be lyke to hym / For none  
ougt to fayne hym self other than  
suche as he is / As to vs reherceth this fable /  
**C** Of a lyon whiche sawe a hors / whiche ete  
grasse in a medowe / And for to fynde somme  
subtylyte and manere for to ete and deuoure  
hym approched to hym / and sayd / God kepe  
the my broder / I am a leche / and with al a good  
phesycyen / **C** And by cause that I see that  
thow haft a fore foote / I am come hyther for  
to hele the of hit / And the hors knewe wel  
all his euyell thought / And sayd to the lyon /  
My broder I thanke the gretely / and thow arte  
welcome to me / I preye the that thow wylt  
make my foote hole / And thenne the lyon sayd  
to the hors / late see thy foote / And as the lyon  
looked on hit / the hors smote hym on the for-  
hede / In suche wyse that he brake his hede and  
fyll oute of his mynde / & the lyon felle to the  
ground / and soo wonderly he was hurte / that  
almost

almost he myght not ryse vp ageyne / And thenne  
fayd the lyon in hym self / I am wel worthy to  
haue had this / For he that sercheth euylle /  
euyll cometh to hym / And by cause that I  
dyffymyled and fayned my self to be a medycyn /  
where as I shold haue shewed mysel a grete  
enemye / I therfore haue receyued good reward /  
and therfore euery body oughte to shewe hym  
self suche as he is /

C The thyrd fable maketh mencion of the asse /  
of the hors / & of theyr fortune

**H**E that is wel fortuned and happy /  
and is atte vpperest of the whele  
of fortune / may wel falle doun /  
And therfore none oughte to des-  
praye the poure / but oughte to  
thynde how the whele of fortune is moche  
doubtous as thewethe this present fable / Of a  
fayr hors whiche was wel harnayfed and arayed /  
and his fadel and brydel garnysshed with gold /  
whiche hors mete with an asse fore laden in a  
narowe way / And by cause that the asse tourned  
hym not a bak Incontynent the hors sayd to  
hym / Ha a chorle haſt thou noo shame ne ver-  
goyne / that thou dost ne bereft none worshippe  
ne reuerence vnto thy lord / who holdeth now  
me / that wyth my foote I breke not thyn hede /  
by cause that thou puttest not thy self afyde  
and oute of my waye / so that I myght pasſe  
& goo on my waye / The poure asse ansuerd  
ne sayd to hym neuer a word / and was fore-  
ſerd that the horse shold haue bete hym / wher-  
fore

fore he held his pees as wyse and fage / And  
the hors wente his waye / ¶ And within a lytyl  
whyl after / it befelle / that fortune tourned his  
whele vp fodoune / For thys fayre hors became  
old lene and feke / ¶ And whanne his mayster  
fawe that his hors was thus lene and feke and  
oute of prospertyte / he comauded that he shold  
be had in to the toun and that in stede of his  
ryche fadel men shold put and sette on his  
backe a panyer for to bere dounge in to the  
feldes / Now it happed that the asse whiche was  
in a medowe etyng grasse perceyued and fawe  
the hors and wel knewe hym / wheroft he was  
wonder abafshed / and merueylled moche that  
he was thus poure and so lene bycome / ¶ And  
the asse went toward hym and sayd / Ha a felawe.  
where is now thy fayre fadel / and thy ryche  
brydel / garnysshed with gold / how arte thou  
now bycome foo lene and suche a payllard /  
what haue prouffyted to the thy fayre and ryche  
rayments / and what auaylled now to thy grete  
syerste and pryd / and thy grete pretumpcion  
whiche ones thou shewest to me / Thynke now /  
how thou arte lene and vnthryfty / and how  
thow and I ben now of one offyce / And the  
myferable and vnhappy hors was abafshed / and  
for shame loked dounward / & ansuerd neuer  
one word / for alle his felicitie was thenne  
turned

turned into aduersyte / ¶ And therfore they that  
ben in felycite / oughte not to dysprayse them /  
whiche ben in aduersyte / For many one I  
knewe ryche and myghty / whiche are now  
poure

**C** The iijij fable maketh mencyon of the beestes  
and of the birdes



One maye do no good to two lordes  
at ones / whiche ben cōtrary one  
to that other / as sayth to vs this  
fable that the beestes made grete  
werre ageynst the byrdes / & fought  
euery day to gyder / And the backe feryng the  
wulues And that the beestes shold vaynquysshē  
and ouercome the byrdes / wold haue hold with  
the beestes / and be ageynst the byrdes / And  
whanne the batylle was ordeyned on bothe sydes /  
the egle beganne to entre in to the batayll of  
the beestes by suche a strengthe / that with the  
help of the other byrdes he gat the feld /  
and vaynquysshēd / and ouercame the bestes /  
wherfor the bestes maade pees with the byrdes /  
and were alle of one accord and of one wylle /  
And for the treason that the backe had made /  
she was condempned to neuer see the day / And  
neuer flee / but only by nyght / And also she was  
despoyllled of alle her fethers / And therfore he  
that wylle serue two lordes cōtrary one to other  
may-not be good ne trewe / And they wheche  
relynquen

relynquen and leue theyr owne lordes for to  
serue another straunger / whiche is enemy to  
theyr lord / ben wel worthy to be punysshed /  
For as the Euangele fayth / None may serue  
bothe god and the deuyl

**C** The v fable is of the nyghtyngale and of  
the sperehawk

**H**E that opprefseth the Innocents  
shalle haue an euyl ende / wherof  
Esop reherceth to vs suche a  
fable / Of a sperehawk / whiche  
dyd put hym within the nest of  
a nyghtyngale / where he fond the lytyl and  
yonge byrdes / the nyghtyngale came and per-  
ceyued hym / wherfore the praed the spere-  
hawk / fayeng / I requyre and praye the as  
muche as I may / that thou haue pyte on  
my smal byrdes / And the sperehawk ansuerd  
and fayd / yf thou wylt that I graunte the  
thy request / thou must synge swetely after my  
wylle and gree And thenne the nyghtyngale  
beganne to synge swetely / not with the herte /  
but with the throte onely / For he was so fulled  
with sorowe that otherwyse he myght not doo /  
The sperehawk fayd thenne to the nyghtyngale /  
This songe playfeth me not / And toke one of the  
yonge byrdes and deuoured hit / And as the fayd  
sperehawk would haue deuoured and eten the  
other came there a hunter whiche dyd caste a  
grete

grete nette vpon the sperehawk / And whanne she  
wold haue flean awey / he myght not / for he  
was taken / And therfore he that doth harme &  
letteth the Innocents / is worthy to deye of euylle  
dethe / As Caym dyd whiche flewe his broder  
Abel

¶ The seventh fable is of the foxe and of  
the wulf



Ortune helpeth bothe the good and  
euylle folke / and to alle them /  
whiche she helpeth not she sendeth  
euylle to them / And they that  
setten alle theyr malyce ageynste  
fortune ben subuertyfed and ouerthrawen by  
her / wheroft Esope reherceth suche a fable / Of  
a wulf whiche had assembled to gyder a grete  
proye / or moche mete for to haue lyued more  
deliciofusly / wheroft the foxe had grete anuye /  
and for to haue robbed somme of this good / he  
came vnto the cauerne or hole where as this  
proye or mete was in / and sayd to the wulf /  
My godsep the wulf / by cause hit is longe syth I  
fawe the / I am in grete heuynesse and forowe /  
and also by cause we haue not been in longtyme  
gone chaced and gone to gyder / ¶ And whan  
the wulf knewe the malyce of the foxe / he sayd  
to hym thow arte not come hyder for to see me /  
ne how I fare / but thou arte come for to robbe  
and rauyshe my good / For the whiche wordes  
the foxe was moche angry / and wente toward a  
sheepherd /

sheepherd / to whome he sayd / yf thou wylt be  
auenged of the wulf whiche is enemy of thy heerd  
or parke / on this day I shalle put hym under  
thy handes / And the sheepherd answere to the  
foxe in this manere / yf thou doo as thou sayst /  
I shall paye the wel / And thenne the foxe  
shewed to hym the hool / wherin the wulf was /  
And the sheepherd Incontynent wente toward  
the hole / and with a spere he kyld the wulf /  
And by this manere the foxe was wel fyllid and  
refreshyed of the good of the other / but as he  
returned home ward / he was tuke and deououred  
by somme dogges / wherfore he sayd to hym self /  
by cause that ryght euylle I hane done / euylle  
cometh thow to me / For synne retorneth euer  
vpon his mayster / And he that lyueth but of  
rauyn and robberye shal at the last be knownen  
and robbed /

¶ The seuenth fable is of the herte and of the  
hunter

**M**En preyfен somtyme that / that  
shold be blamed & vitupered /  
And ofte men blamen & vytu-  
peren that / that shold be preyfed /  
as reciteth to vs this fable of a  
herte / To whome it happyd on a tyme that he  
drank in a fonteyn or welle as he dranke / he  
sawe in the water his hede which was horned /  
wherfore he preyfed moche his hornes / And  
as he loked on his legges / whiche were  
lene and smal / he despreyfed and vytupered  
them / And as he was drynkyng in the fontayne  
he herd the voys and barkynge of dogges /  
wherfore he wold haue fledde awey in to the  
forest for to faue hym self / but as he sawe the  
dogges so nyghe hym he wold haue entred within  
a bushe / but he myght not / for his hornes  
kepte hym withoute / And thenne feyng that  
he myght not escape began to faye within hym  
self / I haue blamed and vytupered my legges /  
whiche haue ben to me vtyle and prouffitable /  
and haue preyfed my hornes / whiche ben now  
caufe

cause of my deth / And therfore men ought to  
desprayse that thynge / whiche is vnprofitable /  
and preyse that whiche is vtile and profitable /  
And they ought to preyse and loue the chirche and  
the commaundements of the same / the whiche  
ben moche vtile & profitayle / And despreyse  
and flee al synne and vyce / whiche ben inutyle  
harmeful and dommageable

**C** The viij fable maketh mencion of Juno / of  
Venus / and of the other wymmen



Efore the goddes and the goddeſſes  
men muſte euer preyſe chaſtite /  
for it is a worshipful & an honest  
thyng to a woman to hold hyr  
contente with a man alone / but  
Venus for her desporte & for to dryue aweye the  
tyme / wold Interprete the fayenge of the hennes /  
wherfore ſhe demaunded a henne whiche was  
in her hows / but at this tyme I ſhal kepe my  
tongue / and no ferther I ſhall speke therof /  
For many wyſe men whiche haue ſene and  
redde alle this book vnderſtanđen wel alle the  
nature of hit / and by cauſe it is lyctye & honest /  
And that we alle ben bounden to kepe the ladyes  
in theyre worship and honour / also that in euery  
place where hit ſhall be poſſyble to vs we ought  
to preyſe them / We ſhall now ceſſe to enquire  
ferther of this matere / and historyye / whiche  
we ſhall leue in latyn for the grete clerkes / & in  
eſpecial for them that wylle occupye theyr tyme  
to judge and rede the gloſe of the ſayd Eſope

¶ The nynthe fable is of the knyght and of  
the wydowe



He woman whiche lyueth in this world without reproche or blame is worthely to be gretely preyfed / Wherof Esope reherceth suche a fable of a man and of a woman / whiche loued moche eche other / It happed thenne by the effors of Atropos or dethe / the whiche we al must suffer that the sayd man deyde / And as men wold haue borne hym in to his graue / whiche was withoute the toune there to be buryed / his wyf made grete sorowe and wepte pyteouly / And whanne he was buryed / she wold abyde styll vpon the graue / and lete do make a lytyll lode or hows therupon / and oute of this lode the wold neuer departe for no prayer ne fayr word / neyther for ony yestes ne for menaces of her parents Now it befell in the toun that a myfdoer was condampned to be hanged / ¶ And to thende that he shold not be taken fro the gallows / hit was thenne commaunded that a knyght shold kepe hym / And as the knyght kepte hym / grete thurste took hym / And as he perceyued the lode  
of

of the sayd woman he wente to her / and prayd  
her to gyue hym somme drynke / And she with  
good herte gaf hym to drynke / And the knyght  
dranke with grete appetyte / as he that had grete  
thurste / & whan he had dronke / he torned ageyne  
to the galhows ward / This knight came another  
tyme to the woman for to comforde her / And  
thre tymes he dyd soo / And as he was thus goyng  
and comynge / doubtynge hym of nobody / his  
hanged man was taken and had fro the galhows /  
And whanne the knyght was come ageyne to  
the galhows & fawe that he had loste his dede  
man / he was gretely abasshed & not withoute  
cause For hit was charged to hym vpon peyne  
to be hanged / yf he were take awey / This  
knyght thenne seynge his Judgement / tourned  
and went ageyne to the sayd woman / & cast  
hym at her feete / and laye before her as he  
had be dede / And she demaūded of hym / My  
frend / what wylt thou that I doo for the / Allas  
sayd he / I praye the that thou focoure and  
counceyll me now at my grete nede / For by  
cause I haue not kept wel my theef / whiche  
men haue rauysched fro me / the kynge shalle  
make me to be put to dethe / And the woman  
sayd / Haue no drede my frend / For well I shalle  
fynde the manere wherby thou shalt be delyuerd /  
For we shall take my husbond / and shalle  
hangen

hange hym in stede of thy theef/ ¶ Thenne  
beganne the to delue / and tooke out of the erthe  
her hutbond / and at nyȝt the hanged hym at  
the galhows in stede of the other / and sayd to  
the knyght / My ryght dere frend I pray the  
that this be kept well secrete / For we doo hit  
theefly / and thus the dede men haue somme /  
whiche make forowe for them / but that forowe  
is sone gone and pat syd / And they whiche ben  
on lyue haue soine whiche drede them / but  
theyr drede wantith and faylleth whan they ben  
dede

**C** The tenth fable maketh menyson of the yong  
man / and of the comyn woman



F the comyn and folyshe wymmen  
Esope reherceth to vs suche a  
fable / Of a woman whiche had  
to name Tahys / the whiche was  
cause by her feyned loue of the  
dethe and losse of many yonge men / to one of the  
whiche she had be bete ofte before that tyme /  
she sayd to hym in this wyse / My ryght dere  
loue and good frende / I suppose that of many  
one I am wel byloued and despred / Neuertheles  
I shall sette my loue on thy self alone / wherfore  
I pray the that thou mayst be myn / and I shalle  
be thyn for alle thy goodes I retche not / but  
only I desyre thy swete body / And he that  
knewe the feynyste and falsheed of the woman /  
ansuered to her / ryght benyngly and swetely / thy  
wyll and the myn ben both but one alone / For  
thow arte she whiche I moost desyre / and the  
whiche I shalle loue all the terme of my lyf / Yf  
thow deceyue me nomore / For by cause that  
thow hast decyued me in tyme passed / I am  
euer afred of the / but notwithstandingynge this /  
thow

thow arte now moche playfaunt and fayr to the  
syghte of me / And thus the one begyled that  
other / For the loue of a comyn woman is not to  
be trusted / For thow oughtest to knowe and  
thynk within thy self/ that the comyn and  
folyssh woman loue the not / but the loueth thy  
syluer

¶ The xij fable is of the fader and of the  
euylle sone



He good and wyse fader ought to  
chastyse his children in theyr yong  
age / and not in theyr old age /  
For thenne hit is moche dyffycyle  
to make them bowe As to us  
reciteth this fable / Of a fader of famylle /  
whiche had a sone / the whiche dyd no thynge  
that he oughte to haue done / but euer was  
goyng and playeng in the toune / And the  
fader for the cryme and myfrewle of his sone  
brawled euer and bete his meyny / And sayd to  
them suche a fable / Of a ploughman or la-  
bourer / whiche bond a bole by the hornes to  
an oxe The booll wold not be bound / and  
smote strongly whith his feet after the man / and  
launched his hornes at hym / ¶ And at the last  
whan he was bound / the labourer sayd to them  
I haue ioyned and bound you bothe to gyder /  
to thende that ye doo somme labour / But I wyll  
that the leſt of yow two / that is to wete the  
boole / be lerned and corryged of the moſte /  
whiche is the oxe / For I must sayd the labourer  
to

to hym self bynde them thus to gyder / to thende  
that the bole / whiche is yong fyen and maly-  
cious and strong / snyte ne hurte nobody /  
wherof grete dommage myght come to me / But  
by cause that I bote well / that the oxe shalle  
teche and corryge hym wel / I haue put and  
bound them bothe to gyder / ¶ Thus this fable  
sheweth to vs / that the fader ought to teche and  
gyue good ensample to his children and chaftyse  
them whanne they be yong For he that well  
loueth / wel he chaftyfeth

**C** The xiij fable is of the serpent



He Auctor that is to wete Esope  
reherceth to vs fuche a fable of  
two euyls / fayeng that a serpent  
entryd som tyme within the forge  
of a smythe / for to ferche somme  
mete for her dyner / It happed / that she fond a  
fyle whiche she beganne to gnawe with her  
teethe / Thenne sayd the fyle to her / yf thou  
byte and gnawe me / yet shalt thou doo to me  
no hurte / but bytyng and gnawyng on me /  
thow shalt hurte thyn owne self / For by my  
strengthe alle the yron is planed by me / And  
therfore thou arte a foole to gnawe me / For  
I telle the / that none euyll may hurte ne adom-  
mage another as euylle as he / Ne none wycked  
may hurte another wycked / ne also the hard  
ageynst the hard shalle not breke eche other /  
ne two enuyous men shal not both ryde vpon an  
asse / wherfor the myghty and stonge must loue  
hym whiche is as myghty and as stronge as hym  
self is

C The xiij fable is of the wulues and of  
the sheep



Hanne men haue a good hede / and  
a good defensour / or a good Capitayne / men oughte not to leue  
hym / for he that leueth hym re-  
penteth hym after ward of hit / as  
to vs reherceth this fable / Of the sheep whiche  
had werre and descencion with the wolues / And  
by cause that the wulues made to stronge werre  
ageynst the sheep / the shepe thenne tooke for  
theyr help the dogges / and the whethers also /  
And thenne was the bataylle of the sheep so grete  
and so stronge / & fought so vygorouly ageynst  
the wolues that they put them to flyȝt C And  
whanne the wolues sawe the strengthe of theyr  
aduersaries / they sent an ambassade toward the  
sheep for to trete the pees with them / the whiche  
Ambassade sayd to the sheep in this maner / yf  
ye wylle gyue us the dogges / we shalle swere  
vnto yow oure feythe / that we shalle neuer kepe  
ne hold werre ageynst yow / And the sheep  
ansuerd / yf ye wylle gyue vs your fayth / we  
shalle be content / And thus they made pees to  
gyder /

gyder / but the wulues kyld the dogges / whiche  
were capytayns and prote&tours of the sheep /  
And the dogges dyde but lytyll hurtet to the wulues /  
wherfore whanne the lytyl and yong wulues  
were growen in theyr age / they came of eche  
part and countrey / and assembled them to gyder /  
and all of one accord and wylle sayd to theyr  
auncestres and faders / we must ete vp alle the  
sheep / And theyr faders ansuerd thus to them /  
we haue made pees with them / Neuertheles the  
yonge wolues brake the pees and ranne fyersly  
vpon the sheep / and theyr faders wente after  
them / ¶ And thus by cause that the sheep had  
delyuered the dogges to the wolues / the whiche  
were theyr capitayns / and that they had none  
that kepte them / they were all eten and de-  
uoured of the wulues / Therfore hit is good to  
kepe well his capytayne / whiche may at a nede  
gyue socor and helpe / For a trewe frend is  
oftyme better at a nede than a Royalme / For  
yf the sheep had kepte the loue of the dogges /  
the wolues had neuer deuoured them / wherfore  
it is a sure thyng to kepe wel the loue of his  
prote&tour and good frende /

## ¶ xiiij fable is of the man and of the wood

**H**e that gyueth ayde and help to his enemy is cause of his dethe / as recyteth this fable of a man whiche made an axe / And after that he had made his axe / he atked of the trees / and sayd / ye trees gyue yow to me a handle / and the trees were content / ¶ And whanne he had maade fast his handle to the axe / he began to cutte and throwe doune to the ground alle the trees / wherfore the oke and the asphe sayd / yf we be cutte / hit is wel ryght and reasoun / For to oure owne self we ben cut and thrawen doune / ¶ And thus hit is not good to put hym self in to the daunger and subiection of his enemye / ne to helpe hym for to be adōmaged / as thou maist see by this presente fable / For men ought not to gyue the staf by whiche they may be beten with

**C** The xv fable is of the wulf and of the dogge.



yberete or freedome is a moche swete  
thyng / as Esope reherceth by  
this fable / of a wulf and of a  
dogge whiche by aduenture mette  
to gyder / wherfore the wulf de-  
maunded of the dogge / wherof arte thou so  
fatte and so playfaunt / And the dogge ansuerd  
to hym / I haue wel kepte my lordes hows / &  
haue barked after the theues whiche came in the  
hows of my mayster / wherfore he and his meyny  
gyue to me plente of good mete / wherof I am  
fatte and playfaunt / and the wulf sayd thenne  
to hym / It is wel sayd my broder / Certaynly  
syth thou arte so wel atte thyn ease and farest so  
wel I haue grete desyre to dwelle with the / to  
thende that thou & I make but one dynner / wel  
sayd the dogge / come on with me yf thou wylt  
be as wel at thyn ease as I am / and haue thou  
no doubte of no thyng / The wulf wente with  
the dogge / and as they wente by the way / the  
wulf beheld the dogges neck / whiche was al  
bare of here / and demaunded of the dogge /  
My broder why is thy neck so shauen / And the  
dog

dog anfuered / it is by cause of my grete coler  
of yron / to the whiche dayly I am fasted / And  
at nyght I am vnbound for to kepe the hows the  
better / Thenne fayd the wulf to the dogge /  
This I wythe ne nede not / For I that am in  
lyberte / wylle not be put in no subiection / And  
therefor for to fyll my bely / I wylle not be  
subget / yf thou be acustommed for to be bound /  
contynue thow in hit / and I thalle lyue as I  
am wonte and acustomed / therfore there is no  
rychesse gretter / than lybete / for lyberte is  
better than alle the gold of the world /

C The rþj fable maketh mencion of the handes /  
of the feet / and of the mans bely



Ow shalle one do ony good to another / the whiche can doo no good to his owne self / as thow mayst see by this fable / Of the feet and of the handes / whiche somtyme had grede stryf with the bely / fayenge / Al that we can or may wynne with grete labour thow etest it all / and yet thou doost no good / wherfore thou shalt no more haue nothyng of vs / and we shalle lete the deye for honger / And thenne when the bely was empty and sore hongry / she beganne to crye and sayd Allas I deye for honger / gyue me somwhat to ete / and the feet and handes sayd / thou getest no thynge of vs / and by cause that the bely myght haue no mete / the conduyts thorugh whiche the metes passeth became smal and narowe / And within fewe dayes after the feete and handes for the feblenes whiche they felte wold thenne haue guuen mete to the bely / but it was to late / for the conduits were ioyned to gyder And therfore the lymmes myght doo no good to other / that is

is to wete the bely / And he that gouerneth not  
wel his bely withe grete Payne he may hold the  
other lymmes in theyr strengthe and vertue /  
wherfore a seruaunt ought to serue wel his  
mayster / to thende that his mayster hold and  
kepe hym honestly / and to receyue and haue  
good reward of hym / when his mayster thalle  
see his feythfulnette

**C** The xvij fable is of the Ape and of the foxe.

F the poure and of the Ryche Esope  
reherceth suche a fable / Of an  
ape / whiche prayd the foxe to  
gyue hym somme of his grete  
taylle for to couere his buttokes  
therwith / fayenge thus to hym / what auaylleth  
to the foo long a taylle / hit doth but wagge /  
And that whiche letteth the / shalle be prouffit-  
able and good for me / The foxe said to hym  
I wold that hit were yet lenger / For rather I  
wold see hit al to fowled and dagged / than hit  
shold bere to yow suche honour / as to couere  
thy fowle buttoks therwith / And therfore gyue  
thou not that thynge of whiche thou hast nede  
of / to the ende that afterward thou myster not  
of hit

C The xviiiij fable is of the marchaunt and  
of the asse

any one ben trauaylled after theyr  
dethe / wherfore men ought not  
to desyre the dethe / As reherceth  
Esope by this fable / Of a mar-  
chaunt whiche ladde an asse laden  
vnto the market / And for to be the sooner at  
the market / he bete his asse / and sore prycked  
hym / wherfore the poure asse wysshed & desyred  
his owne deth / wenynge to hym that after his  
dethe he shold be in rest / And after that he  
had be wel bete and chaced he deyde / And  
his mayster made hym to be flayne / and of his  
skynne he dyd doo make tumbours whiche ben  
euer bete / And thus for what Payne that men  
may haue durynge his lyf / he ought not to  
desyre and wysshe his dethe / For many one  
ben / whiche haue grete Payne in this world  
that shall haue a gretter in the other world /  
For the man hath no rest for the dethe but for  
his merytes

¶ The xix fable is of the herte and of the ore



Nely for to flee is assured to scape  
 the daunger wherfore he fleeth /  
 As thou shalt nowe see by this  
 fable / Of a herte whiche rane  
 byfore the dogges / and to thende  
 that he shold not be take / he fledde in to the  
 fyrst toun that he found / & entryd in to a stable  
 where as many oxen were / to whom he sayd the  
 caufe why he was come there / prayeng them  
 swetely that they wold saue hym / And the  
 oxen sayd then to hym / Allas poure herte thou  
 arte amonge vs euylle adressyd / thou sholdest  
 be more surely in the feldes ¶ For yf thou be  
 perceyued or sene of the oxeherd or els of the  
 mayster / Certaynly thou arte but dede / Helas  
 for god & for pyte I praye yow that ye wylle  
 hyde me within your racke / and that ye deceyue  
 me not / and at nyght next comynge / I shalle  
 goo hens / and shalle putte my self in to a sure  
 place / ¶ And whanne the feruaunts came for  
 to gyue hey to the oxen / they dyd cast heye  
 before the oxen / and wente ageyne theyre waye  
 and sawe not the hert / wheroft the herte was  
 gretely reioysched wenynge to haue scaped the  
 perylle

perylle of dethe / He thenne rendred thanke  
and grace to the oxen / and one of the oxen sayd  
to hym / It is facyle to scape out of the handes  
of the blynd but hit is not facyle to scape out of  
the handes of hym that feeth wel / For yf oure  
mayster come hyther whiche hath more than an  
honderd eyen / Certayn thow arte deed yf he  
perceyue the ¶ And yf he see the not / cer-  
tainly thow arte sauad / and shalt goo forthe on  
thy waye surely /

The mayster within a short whyle after entryd  
in to the stable / And after he commaunded to  
vyfyte and see the hey / whiche was before his  
oxen / And hym self went and tasted / yf they  
had ymough of hit / And as he tasted thus the  
heye / he felt the hornes of the herte with his  
hand / and to hym self he sayd / what is that  
that I fele here / and beyng dredeful called alle  
his seruauntes / and demaunded of the manere  
how the herte was come thyder / And they sayd  
to hym / my lord I knowe nothyng therof /  
And the lord was full gladde and made the  
herte to be taken and slayne / and maade a grete  
feest for to haue ete hym / Therfore it happeth  
oftyme / that he whiche supposeth to flee is  
taken and hold within the lace or nette / For he  
that fleeth awey is in grete perylle / wherfore  
men ought wel to kepe them self to doo suche  
dede / that they must nedes flee therfore

C The xx fable maketh mencion of the fallace of  
the lyon / And of his conuersacion

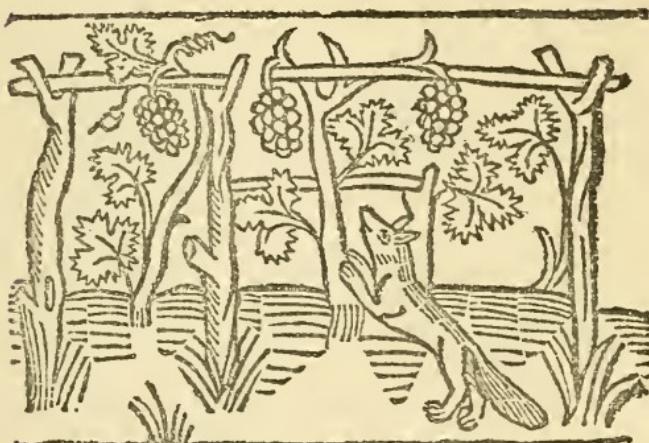


O conuerse with folke of euylle lyf  
is a thyng moche peryllous / And  
only to speke with them letteth  
moch other / As this fable reher-  
ceth of a lyon ryght strong and  
ryght myghty / the whiche made hym self kynge  
for to haue grete renom mee and glorye / And fro  
thenne forthon he beganne to chaunge his con-  
dycions and customme shewing hym self curtois /  
and swore that he shold hurte no bestes / but  
shold kepe them ageynst euyer one / And of this  
promise he repented hym by cause hit is moche  
dyffycyle and hard to chaunge his owne kynd /  
And therfore whanne he was angry / he lad  
with hym somme smalle beestes in to a secrete  
place for to ete and deceyue them / And de-  
maunded of them / yf his mouthe stanke or not /  
And alle they that sayd that it stanke or not  
were al sauued / And alle they the whiche an-  
suered not he kylled / & deuoured them al / It  
happed that he demaunded of the Ape / yf his  
mouthe stanke or not / And thape sayd no but  
that

that hit smelleth lyke bame / And thenne the  
lyon had shame to flee the ape / but he fond a  
grete falsheed for to put hym to dethe / He  
fayned to be seke and commaunded that al his  
leches & Cyrurgyens shold anone come vnto hym /  
whan they were come / he commaunded them  
to loke his vryne / And whan they had sene hit /  
they sayd to hym / Syre ye shalle foone be hole /  
But ye must ete lyght metes / And by cause  
that ye be kynge / alle is at your commaundement /  
And the lyon ansuerd Allas Ryght fayne  
I wold ete of an Ape / Certaynly sayd the  
medecyn that same is good mete / Thenne was  
the Ape sente for And notwithstandingyng that  
he worshipfully spak and ansuerd to the kynge /  
the kynge made hym to dye / and deuoured  
hym ¶ Therfore hit is peryllous and harmeful  
to be in the felauiship of a Tyraunt / For be hit  
euylle or good he wylle ete and deuoure euery  
thyng / And wel happy is he / that may escape  
fro his blody handes / And that may eschewe  
and flee the felauiship of the eyll tyraunt

¶ Here syngsshed the thyrde booke of the  
subtile fables of Esop /

**C** The fyrist fable maketh mencyon of the foxe  
and of the raysyns



**E** is not wyse / that desyreth to haue  
a thynge whiche he may not  
haue / As reciteth this fable Of  
a foxe / whiche loked and beheld  
the raysyns that grewe vpon an  
hyghe vyne / the whiche raysyns he moche  
desyred for to ete them **C** And whanne he  
sawe that none he myght gete / he torned his  
sorowe in to Ioye / and sayd these raysyns ben  
fowre /

towre / and yf I had some I wold not ete them /  
And therfore this fable sheweth that he is wyse /  
whiche fayneth not to desyre that thyngē the  
whiche he may not haue /

¶ The second fable is of the auncyent wesel and  
of the rat /



Ytte is better than force or strengthe /  
As reherceth to vs this fable of  
an old wesel / the whiche myghte  
no more take no rats / wherfore  
she was ofte sore hongry and be-  
thought her that she shold hyde her self with-  
ynne the flowre for to take the rats whiche came  
there for to ete hit. And as the rats came to the  
floure / she took and ete them eche one after  
other / And as the oldest rat of all perceyued  
& knewe her malyce / he sayd thus in hym  
self / Certaynly I shalle kepe me wel fro the /  
For I knowe alle thy malyce & falshede ¶ And  
therfore he is wyse that scapeth the wytte and  
malyce of eylle folke / by wytte and not by  
force

C The thirde fable is of the wulf and of the  
sheepheard and of the hunter

**M**Any folke shewe themself good by  
theyr wordes whiche are ful of  
grete fantasyes / As reherceth to  
vs thys fable of a wulf whiche  
fledde byfore the hunter / and as  
he fledde he mette with a sheepheard / to whome  
he said my frende I praye the that thou telle  
not to hym that folowith me whiche wey I am  
gone / & the sheep herd said to hym haue no  
drede ne fere nothyng / For I shalle not accuse  
the / For I shalle shewe to hym another way /  
And as the hunter came / he demaunded of the  
sheepheard yf he had sene the wulf passe / And  
the hunter both with the heed and of the eyen  
shewed to the hunter the place where the wulf  
was / & with the hand and the tongue shewed  
alle the contrarye / And incontynent the hunter  
vnderstood hym wel / But the wulf whiche per-  
ceyned wel all the fayned maners of the sheep-  
heard fled awey / C And within a lytyl whylle  
after the sheepheard encountered and mette with  
the wulf / to whome he sayd / paye me of that

I haue kepte the secrete/ ¶ And thenne the  
wulf ansuered to hym in this maner/ I thanke  
thyn handes and thy tongue/ and not thyn hede  
ne thyn eyen/ For by them I shold haue ben  
betrayed/ yf I had not fledde aweye/ ¶ And  
therfore men must not trusfe in hym that hath  
two faces and two tongues/ for suche folk is  
lyke and semblable to the scorpion/ the whiche  
enoynteth with his tongue/ and prycketh fore  
with his taylle

**C** The south fable is of Juno the goddesse and  
of the pecok and of the nyghtyngale



Very one oughte to be content of  
kynde / and of suche good as god  
hath fente vnto hym / wherof he  
must vse Iustly / As reherceth  
this fable of a pecok whiche came  
to Juno the goddesse / and sayd to her I am  
heuy and forowful / by cause I can not syng  
as wel as the nyghtyngale For euery one  
mocketh and scorneth me / by cause I can not  
syng / And Juno would comforthe hym and  
sayd / thy fayre forme and beaute is fayrer and  
more worthy and of gretter preysyng than the  
songe of the nyghtyngale / For thy fethers and  
thy colour ben resplendysyng as the precious  
Emerawd And theyr is no byrde lyke to thy  
fethers ne to thy beaulte / **C**And the pecok  
sayd thenne to Juno / All this is nought / syth  
I can not syng / And thenne Juno sayd ageyne  
thus to the pecok for to contente hym / This is  
in the desposycion of the goddes / whiche haue  
gyuen to eyther of yow one propyrte / and one  
verteue / suche as it pleasyd them / As to the  
they

they haue gyuen fayr fygure / to the egle haue  
they gyuen strengthe / and to the nyghtyngale  
fayr & playfaūt songe / And so to all other  
byrdes / wherfore euery one muſt be content  
of that that he hath For the myſerable auary-  
cious / the more goodes that they haue the more  
they defyre to haue

**C** The v fable maketh mencion of the panthire  
and of the vylayns

Very one ought to do wel to the straunger and forgyue to the myserable/ As reherceth this fable of a panthere whiche fylle in to a pytte/ And whan the vylaynes or chorles of the country sawe her/ somme of them beganne to smyte on her/ and the other sayd pardonne and forgyue her/ for she hath hurted no body/ and other were that gaf to her breed/ And another sayd to the vylayns/ beware ye well that ye flee her not/ And by cause that they were al of dyuerse wyll/ euerychone of them wente and retorneled home ageyne wenynge that she shold deye within the sayd pytte/ but lytyl and lytyl she clymmed vp/ and wente to her hows ageyne/ and made her to be wel medicyned/ in so moche/ that soone she was al hole/ **C**And within a whylle after she hauyng in her memorye the grete Iniurye that had be done to her came ageyne to the place where she had be hurte and sore bete/ & began to kyll & flee al the bestes whiche were there

there about and put al the shepherds and swyne-  
herds & other whiche kepte beeftes all to flyght /  
she brente the Corne & many other euyl and  
grete harme she dyd then aboute / And whanne  
the folke of the country fawe the grete dom-  
mage that she dyd to them / they came toward  
her / prayenge that she wold haue pyte on them /  
And to them she ansuerd in this manere / I am  
not come hyther to take vengeaunce on them  
whiche haue had pyte and myferycorde of me /  
but only on them that wold haue slayne me /  
And for the wycked and euyele folk I recytle this  
fable / to thende that they hurte no body / For  
yf alle the vylaynes hadde hadde pyte / the one  
as the other of the poure panthere or serpent  
whiche was straunger and myferable / as moche  
as she was fallen in to the pytte / the for sayd  
euylle and dommyge had not come to them

¶ The vi fable is of the bochers and of the  
whethers



Hanne a lygnage or kynred is in-  
dyfferent or indyuysyon / not  
lyghtly they shalle doo ony thynges  
to theyr salute / as reherceth to vs  
this fable / Of a bocher whiche  
entryd within a stable full of whethers / And after  
as the whethers sawe hym / none of them sayd  
one word / And the bocher toke the fyrst that  
he fonde / ¶ Thenne the whethers spake al to  
gyder and sayd / lete him doo what he wylle /  
And thus the bocher tooke him all one after  
another sauf one onely / And as he wold haue  
taken the last / the poure whether sayd to hym /  
Iustly I am worthy to be take / by cause I haue  
not holpen my felawes / For he that wylle not  
helpe ne conforte other / ought not to demaunde  
or aske helpe ne conforte / For vertue whiche is  
vnyed is better than vertue separate

¶ The seuenth fable is of the fawkoner and of  
the byrdes



He wyse ought to kepe and obserue  
the good couceyll / And in no  
wyse they ought not to doo the  
contrarye / As reherceth to vs  
this fable / Of the byrdes whiche  
were Ioyeful and gladde / as the prymtempis  
came / by cause that theyr nestes were thenne al  
couerd with leues / And Incontynent they be-  
held and sawe a fawkoner whiche dresyd and  
leyd laces and nettes for to take them / ¶ And  
thenne they sayd al to gyder / Yonder man hath  
pyte of vs / For whanne he beholdeth vs he  
wepeth / ¶ And thenne the pertryche / whiche  
had experimented and assayed all the deceytes  
of the sayd Fawkoner / sayd to them / kepe yow  
alle wel fro that sayd man and flee hyghe in to  
the ayer / For he seketh nothyng / but the  
manere for to take yow / or to the markette he  
shalle bere yow for to be fold / And they that  
byleuyd his couceylle were faued / And they  
that byleuyed it not were taken and lost / ¶ And  
therfore they whiche byleue good councylle are  
delyuerd oute of theyr peryles / And they whiche  
byleue it not ben euer in grete daunger



N tyme passed men preydyd more  
the folke full of lesynges and fals-  
hede than the man full of trouthe/  
the whiche thynge regneth gretely  
vnto this daye/ As we may see  
by this present fable/ Of the man of trouthe  
and of the man lyar/ whiche went to gyder  
thorugh the countrey/ And so longe they wente  
to gyder by theyr journeyes/ that they came in  
to the prouunce of the apes/ And the kynge of  
thapes made them bothe to be taken and brought  
before hym And he beyng in his Royal mageste/  
where as he satte lyke an Emperour/ and alle  
his Apes abouthe hym / as the subgetts ben abouthe  
theyr lord / wold haue demaunded / and in dede  
he demaunded of the lyer / who am I / And the  
lesyngemaker and flaterer sayd to hym / thou  
arte emperour and kynge / the fayrest creature  
that is on earthe / ¶ And after the kynge de-  
maunded of hym ageyne / who ben these whiche  
ben al abouthe me / And the lyar ansuerd / Syre  
they ben thy knyghtes & your subgettes for to  
kepe

kepe your persone / and your Royalme / And thenne the kynge sayd thou arte a good man / I wylle that thou be my grete stward of my housshold / and that euery one bere to the honour and reuerence / And whan the man of trouthe herd alle this he sayd to hym self / yf this man for to haue made lesynges is soo gretely enhaunced / thenne by gretter rayson / I shalle be more worshipped and enhaunced / yf I saye trouthe / ¶ And after the kynge wold aske the trewe man / and demaunded of hym / who am I / and alle that ben abouthe me / And thenne the man of trouthe ansuerd thus to hym / thou arte an ape and a beste ryght abhomynable / And alle they whiche ben abouthe the are lyke and semblable to the / ¶ The kynge thenne commaunded that he shold be broken and toren with teeth and clawes and put alle in to pycees / And therfore it happeth ofte that the lyers and flaterers ben enhauced / and the men of trouthe ben set alowe and put aback / For oftyme for to saye trouthe men lese theyre lyues / the whiche thynge is ageynst Iustye and equyte

¶ The ix fable is of the hors / of the hunter and  
of the herte /



One ought to put hym self in subiec-  
tion for to auenge hym on other /  
For better is not to submytte hym-  
self / than after to be submytted /  
As reherceth to vs this fable / Of  
an hors whiche had enuye ouer an herte / by  
cause the herte was fayrer than he / and the  
hors by enuye went vnto an hunter / to whome  
he sayd in this manere / yf thou wylt byleue  
me / we shalle this day take a good proye /  
Lepe vpon my bak / and take thy swerd / and  
we shalle chace the herte / and thou shalt hytte  
hym with thy swerd / and kylle hym / and  
shalt take hym / and thenne his fleiſhe thou  
mayſt ete / and his skynne thou mayſt felle /

¶ And thenne the hunter moned by auaryce /  
demaunded of the hors / thynkest thou by thy  
feythe that we may take the herte / of whommie  
thow spekest to me of / ¶ And the hors anſwerd  
thus / Suffys the / For ther to I shalle put al  
my dylygence and alle my strengthe / lepe vpon  
me / and doo after my coundeylle / ¶ And  
thenne

thenne the Hunter lepteth forthwith vpon the  
hors backe / And the hors beganne to renne  
after the herte / And whanne the herte fawte /  
hym come he fled / And by cause that the hert  
ranne faster / than the hors did / he scaped fro  
them / and fawed hym / ¶ And thenne when the  
hors fawte and felte hym moche wary / and that  
he myght no more renne / he sayd to the hunter  
in this manere / alyght fro my back / For I may  
bere the no more and haue myft of my proye /  
Thenne sayd the hunter to the hors Syth thou  
arte entryd in to my handes / yet shalt not thou  
escape thus fro me / thou hast the brydel in thy  
mouthe wherby thou mayest be kepte styll and  
arrested / And thou wylt lepe / the fadell shalle  
fauue me / And yf thou wylt caste thy feet fro  
the / I haue good spores for to constraine and  
make the goo whether thou wylt or not where  
as I wylle haue the / And therfore kepe the  
wel / that thou shewest not thy self rebelle vnto  
me / ¶ Therfore it is not good to put and  
submytte hym self vnder the handes of other  
wenyng therby to be auenged of hym / ageynste  
whome men haue enuye / For who submytteth  
hym self vnder the myght of other / he byndeth  
hym self to hym

**C** The tenth fable is of the asse and of the lyon

**H**e grete callers by theyr hyghe and  
lowd crye supposen to make folke  
aferd/ As recyteth this fable/ Of  
an asse whiche somtyme mette  
with a lyon / to the whiche the  
asse sayd / lette vs clymme vpon the montayne /  
and I thalle shewe to the / how the beestes ben  
aferd of me / and the lyon beganne to smyle /  
and he ansuerd to the asse / Goo we my broder /  
And whan they were on the top of the hylle /  
the asse byganne to crye / And the foxe and  
hares beganne to flee / And whanne thaise saw  
them flee sayd to the lyon / Seest thou not how  
these beestes dreden and doubten me / and the  
lyon sayde / I had ben also ferdfull of thy voys /  
yf I had not knownen veryly that thou arte but  
an asse / **C** And therfore men nede not doubte  
ne drede hym that auanceth hym self for to do  
that that he may not doo / For god kepe the  
mone fro the wulues / Ne also men nede not  
doubte a foole for his menaces / ne for his hyghe  
crye

¶ The xij fable is of the hawke and of other  
byrdes



He ypcrytes maken to god a berd  
of strawe / As recyteth to vs this  
fable / Of a hawke / whiche som-  
tyme fayned / that he wold haue  
celebrated and holden a natall or  
a grete feste / the whiche feste shold be celebred  
within a Temple / And to this feste and solemp-  
nyte he Inuyted and somoned alle the smal  
byrdes / to the whiche they came / And Inkon-  
tynent as they were all come in to the temple /  
the hauk shette the gate and put them alle to  
dethe / one after an other / ¶ And therfore this  
fable sheweth to vs / how we must kepe our self  
fro all them / whiche vnder fayre semynge haue  
a fals herte / and that ben ypcytes and decep-  
tors of god and of the world /

¶ The xiij fable is of the foxe / and of the lyon



Ayre doctryne taketh he in hym self / that chastyfeth hym by the perylle of other / As to vs reherceth this present fable / Of a lyon whiche somtyme faygned hym self seke / ¶ And whanne the beeftes knewe that the lyon was seke / they wold goo alle to vysyte and see hym as theyr kynge / ¶ And Incontynent as the beeftes entryd in to his hows for to see and conforte hym / he deuoured and ete them / ¶ And whan the foxes were come to the yate for to haue vysyded the lyon / they knewe wel the fallace and falshede of the lyon and falewed hym at the entre of the yate / And entryd not within / ¶ And whan the lyon sawe that they wold not entre in to his hows / he demaūded of them / why they wold not come within / And one of the foxes sayd to hym / we knowe wel by thy traces / that alle the beeftes whiche haue entryd in to thy hows came not oute ageyne / And also yf we entryd within / nomore shold we come ageyne ¶ And therfor he is wel happy that taketh ensample by

by the dommage of other / ¶ For to entre  
in to the hows of a grete lord / it is wel facyle /  
but for to come oute of hit ageyne it is moche  
dyffycyle /

**C** The xiij fable is of the asse / and of the wulf

O none eylle man seythe ne trouthe  
ought neuer to be adiousted /  
As men may wel see by this  
fable / Of a wulf whiche vysyted  
an asse whiche was wel seke the  
whiche wulf beganne to fele and taste hym / and  
demaunded of hym / My broder and my frend  
where aboute is thy sore / And the asse sayd to  
hym / there as thou tastest **C** And thenne the  
wulf faynyng to vysyte hym / beganne to byte  
and smyte hym / **C** And therfore men must not  
trust flaterers / For one thynge they saye / and  
done another

**C**The xiiij fable is of the hedgehogge and of the  
lytyl kyddes



T behodeth not to the yong and lytyl of age to mocke ne scorne theyr older / As this fable sayth / of thre lytyl hedgehogges / whiche mocked a grete hedgehogge / whiche fled before a wulf / And whanne he perceyued the scornyng of them / he sayd to them / Ha a poure fooles & wood ye wote not wherfore I flee / For yf ye wylt and knewe wel thyn conuenyent and paryll / ye shold not mocke of hit / And therfore whan men seen that the grete and myghty ben ferdful and doubtous / the lasse or lytyll oughen not to be assured / For whan the toune is taken and gotten by fortune of warre the Country aboute is not therfore more acertayned / but ouȝt to tremble and shake

**C** The xv fable is of the man and of the lyon /



En ought not to byleue the paynture /  
but the trouthe and the dede /  
As men may see by this present  
Fable / Of a man & of a lyon  
whiche had stryf to gyder & were  
in grete discension for to wete and knowe /  
whiche of them bothe was more stronger /  
**C** The man sayd that he was stronger than the  
lyon / And for to haue his fayenge veryfyed /  
he shewed to the lyon a py&tour / where as a  
man had vyctory ouer a lyon / As the py&tour of  
Sampson the stronge **C** Thenne sayd the lyon  
to the man / yf the lyon coude make py&tour  
good and trewe / hit had be herin paynted /  
how the lyon had had vyctorye of the man /  
but now I shalle shewe to the very and trewe  
wytnesse therof / The lyon thenne ledde the  
man to a grete pytte / And there they fought  
to gyder / But the lyon caste the man into the  
pytte / and submytted hym in to his subiection  
and sayd / Thow man / now knowest thou alle  
the trouthe / whiche of vs bothe is stronger /  
**C** And therfore at the werke is knownen the best  
and most subtile werker /

**C** The xvj fable is of the camel / and of the flee



E that hath no myght ought not to  
gloryfye ne preyse hym self of no-  
thyngē / As reherceth to vs this  
presente fable of a camell / whiche  
bare a grete charge or burden

It happed that a flee by cause of the camels  
here lepte to the back of the camel / and made  
her to be borne of hym all the day And whanne  
they had made a grete way / And that the  
camel came at euen to the lodgys / and was put  
in the stable / the flee lepte fro hym to the  
grounde besyde the foote of the camel / And  
after sayd to the camel / I haue pyte of the /  
and am comen doun fro thy back by cause that  
I wylle nomore greue ne trauaylle the by the  
beryngē of me / And the camel sayd to the  
flee / I thanke thee / how be it that I am not  
sore laden of the / And therfore of hym which  
may neyther helpe ne lette men nede not make  
grete estymacion of

**C** The xvij fable is of the Ant and of the sygale

T is good to purvey hym self in the  
somer season of suche thynges /  
wherof he shalle myster and haue  
nede in wynter season / As thow  
mayst see by this present fable /  
Of the sygalle / whiche in the wynter tyme went  
and demaunded of the ant somme of her Corne  
for to ete / **C** And thenne the ant sayd to the  
sygall / what hast thou done al the somer lat  
paſſed / And the sygalle ansuerd / I haue songe /  
**C** And after sayd the ante to her / Of my corne  
shallt not thou none haue / And yf thou haſt  
songe alle the somer / danſe now in wynter /  
**C** And therfore there is one tyme for to doo ſome  
labour and werk / And one tyme for to haue  
reſt / For he that werketh not ne doth no good /  
thal haue oste at his teeth grete cold and lacke  
at his nede /

¶ The xvijij fable is of the pylgrym and of the  
fwerd

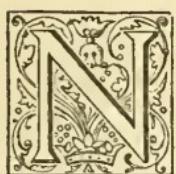


In euylle man maye be cause of the  
perdycion or losse of many folke /  
As reherceth to vs this prefent  
Fable / Of a pylgrym / whiche  
fond in his way a fwerd ¶ And  
asked of the fwerd / what is he that hath lost  
the / ¶ And the fwerd answerd to the pylgrym /  
A man alone hath lost me / but many one I  
haue lost / And therfor an euyl man may wel  
be lost / but er he be lost he may wel lette many  
one / For by cause of an euylle man may come  
in a Countrey many euyls

## ¶ The xix fable is of the sheep and of the Crowe

**M**en ought not to iniurye ne defraye the poure Innocentes ne the symple folke. As reherceth this fable / Of a Crowe / whiche sette her self vpon the back of a sheep / And whan the sheep had born her a grete whyle she sayd to her / thow shalt kepe thy self wel to sette vpon a dogge / ¶ And thenne the crowe sayd to the sheep / Thynke thow poure Innocent that I wote wel with whome I playe / For I am old and malycious / and my kynde is to lette all Innocents / and to be frende vnto the euyls / ¶ And therfore this fable wylle telle and saye / how ther be folke of suche kynde / that they wyl doo no good werk / but only to lette euer the Innocents and symple folke

¶ The xx fable maketh mencion of the tree and  
of the reed /

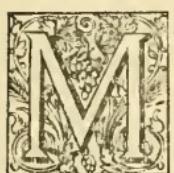


One ought to be proud ageynst his lord / but oughte to humble hym self toward hym / As this fable reherceth to vs of a grete tre / whiche wold neuer bowe hym for none wynd / And a reed whiche was at his foote bowed hym self as moche as the wynd wold / And the tree sayd to hym / why dost thou not abyde styll as I doo / And the reed ansuerd / I haue not the myght whiche thou hast / And the tree sayd to the reed proudly / than haue I more strengthe / than thou / And anone after came a grete wynde / whiche threwe doun to the ground the sayd grete tree / and the reed abode in his owne beynge / For the prowde shall be allway humbled And the meke and hūble shalle be enhaunced / For the roote of alle vertue is obedynce and humlylyte

¶ Here synyssheth the fourthe book of the sub-  
tyle Fables of Esop / And how be it that  
mor

mor of them ben not found in ony Reg-  
ystre / Neuertheles many other fables com-  
posed by hym / haue ben sounden whiche  
here after folowen

¶ The syrste fable maketh mencion of the mulet /  
of the foxe / and of the wulf



En Calle many folke Asses / that  
ben wel subtyll / And suche  
wenen to knowe moche / and to  
be a grete clerke that is but an  
asse / As hit appiereth by thys  
fable / Of a mule whiche ete grasse in a medowe  
nyghe to a grete forest / to whome came a foxe  
whiche demaunded of hym / What arte thou /  
And the mule ansuerd I am a beest / And the  
foxe sayd to hym / I ne demaunde ne aske of  
the that / but I aske who was thy fader / ¶ And  
the mule ansuerd / my grete fader was a hors /  
And the foxe sayd ageyne I ne demaunde to the  
that / but only that thou tellest me / who thou  
arte named / And the mule sayd to the foxe /  
I ne wote / by cause I was lytyll whanne my  
fader deyde / Neuertheles to thende that my  
name shold not be forgoten / my fader made hit  
to be wreton vnder my lyfte foote behynde /  
wherfore uf thou wylt knowe my name / goo  
thow and loke vnder my foote / ¶ And whanne  
the foxe vnderstood the fallace or falshede / he  
wente

wente ageyne into the forest / And met with  
the wulf/ to whome he sayd/ Ha myschaunt  
beest/ what dost thou here/ Come with me  
and in to thy hand I shall put a good proy  
Loke in to yonder medowe/ there shalt thou  
fynde a fatte beest Of the whiche thou mayst  
be fylled/ ¶ And thenne the wulf entryd in  
to the medowe/ and fonde there the mule/  
Of whom he demaunnded/ who arte thou/  
And the mule ansuerd to the wulf/ I am  
a beest/ And the wulf sayd to hym/ This  
is not that that I aske to the/ but telle how  
thou arte named/ And the mule sayd I wote  
not/ but neuertheless yf thou wylt knowe my  
name/ thou shalt fynde it wreton at my lyfte  
foote behynde/ Thenne sayd the wulf/ I praye  
the/ vouche sauf to shewe it to me/ And the  
mule lyft up his foote/ ¶ And as the wulf  
beheld and studyed in the foote of the mule/ the  
Mule gaf hym suche a stroke whith his foote  
before his forhede/ that almost the brayne ranne  
oute of his hede/ And the foxe whiche was  
within a busilhe and sawe alle the maner beganne  
to lawhe and mocque the wulf/ to whomme  
he sayd/ Foole beeste thou wost wel/ that  
thou canst not rede/ wherfore yf euylle is therof  
come to the/ thy self is cause of hit/ For none  
ought not to entremete hym to doo that/ that  
Imposyble is to hym /

¶ The second fable is of the bore and of the wulf



Vche defyren to be grete lordes /  
and dyspreysen his parents / that  
at the last becomen poure and  
fallen in to grete dishonour / As  
thow mayst see by this present  
fable / Of a bore / whiche was amonge a grete  
herd of other swynes / And for to haue lordship  
and domynacion ouer alle them / he beganne to  
make grete rumour / and shewed his grete teeth  
for to make the other swynes aferd / but by  
cause they knewe hym / they sette naught by  
hym / wherof he displeased moche / and wold  
goo in to a herd of sheep / and emonge lambes /  
And whanne he was amonge the lambes / he  
began to make grete rumour / and shewed his  
sharp and long teeth ¶ And whanne the lambes  
herd hym / they were sore aferd / and begganne  
to shake for fere / ¶ And thenne sayd the bore  
within hym self / here is the place wherin I  
must abyde and duell For here I shalle be  
gretely worshipped / For euerychone quaken  
for fere of me / ¶ Thenne came the wulf there  
for to haue and rauyffe somme proye / And  
the

the lambes beganne alle to flee/ but the bore  
as proud wold not stere hym/ ne go fro the  
place/ by cause he supposed to be lord/ but the  
wulf toke hym/ and bare hym in to the wode  
for to ete hym/ ¶ And as the wulf bare hym/  
it happed that he passid before the herd of  
swynes/ whiche the bore had leste/ ¶ And  
thenne whanne the bore perceyued and knewe  
them/ he prayd and cryed to them/ that for the  
loue of god they wold helpe hym/ And that  
withoute her help/ he was deed/ And thenne  
the swynes alle of one assent and owne wylle  
wente and recouered theyr felewe/ and after  
flewe the wulf/ And as the bore was delyuerd/  
and sawe hym amonge the swynes/ and that alle  
his doubte and fere was gone/ he beganne to  
haue vergoyne and shame/ by caufe that he was  
thus departed/ and gone fro theyr felaufhip and  
sayd to them/ My bretheren and my frendes/ I  
am well worthy to haue had this payne/ by  
cause/ I was gone & departed from yow/ And  
therfore he that is wel/ lete hym beware that  
he moue not hym self/ For suche by his pryd  
desyreteth to be a grete lord/ whiche ofte falleth  
in grete pouerte/

¶ The thyrd fable is of the foxe and of the cocke /



Ftyme moche talkynge letteth / As hit appiereth by this fable / Of a foxe / whiche came toward a Cocke / And sayd to hym / I wold fayne wete / yf thou canst as wel syng as thy fader dyde / And thenne the Cock shette his eyen / and beganne to crye and syng / ¶ And thenne the Foxe toke and bare hym awey / And the peple of the towne cryed / the foxe bereth awey the cok / ¶ And thenne the Cocke sayd thus to the Foxe / My lord vnderstandest thou not / what the peple sayth / that thou bereft awey theyr cock / telle to them / that it is thyn / and not theyrs / And as the foxe sayd / hit is not yours / but it is myn / the cok scaped fro the foxe mouthe / and flough vpon a tree / And thenne the Cok sayd to the foxe thou lyest / For I am theyrs and not thyn / And thenne the foxe beganne to hytte erthe bothe with his mouthe & heed fayenge / mouthe / thou hast spoken to moche / thou sholdest haue eten the Cok / had not be thyn ouer

ouer many wordes/ And therfor ouer moche  
talkyng letteth/ and to moche crowynege smart-  
eth/ therfore kepe thy self fro ouer many  
wordes/ to thende/ that thow repenteſt the  
not

**C** The fourthe fable is of the dragon and of the  
herete



En ought not to rendre euylle for  
good / And them that helpen  
ought not to be letted / As re-  
herceth thys fable Of a dragon  
whiche was within a Ryuer / and  
as this Ryuer was dymynuysshed of water / the  
dragon abode at the Ryuage / whiche was al  
drye / And thus for lack of watre he coude  
not stere hym / A labourer or vylayne came  
thene that waye / and demaunded of the dragon /  
what doſt thou there / And the dragon ansuerd  
to hym / I am here leſte withoute water / with-  
oute whiche I can not meue / but yf thou wilt  
bynd me / and ſette me vpon thyn aſſe / and  
lede me in to my Ryuer / I ſhal gyue to the  
habondaunce of gold and ſyluer / And the  
vylayne or chorle for courtyſe bound and ledde  
hym in to his repayre / And whanne he had  
vnbounden hym / he demaunded his fallary /  
and payment / And the dragon ſayd to hym /  
By cauſe that thou haſt bounden me / thou  
wylt

wylt be payd And by cause that I am now  
hongry / I shalle ete the / and the vylayne  
ansuerd and sayd / For to hane done wel / thow  
wylt ete and deuoure me / And as they ftryued  
to gyder / the foxe whiche was within the forest  
herd wel theyr question and different came to  
them / and sayd in this manere / Stryue ye no  
more to gyder / For I wyll acord / and make  
pees bytwixt you Late eche of yow telle to me  
his reasoun for to wete / whiche of yow hath  
ryght / And whanne eche of them had told  
his caas the foxe sayd to the vylayne / Shewe  
thow to me / how thow boundest the dragon /  
to thende / that I may gyue therof a trewe and  
lawfull sentence / And the vylayne put the  
dragon vpon his atfe / and bound hym as he  
had done before / And the fox demaunded of  
the dragon / helde he thenne the so fast bounden /  
as he dothe now / And the dragon ansuerd / ye  
my lord / and yet more hard / And the foxe  
sayd to the vylayn / Bynde hym yet more  
harder / For who that wel byndeth / well can  
he vnbynd And whanne the dragon was fast  
and wel bounden / the fox sayd to the vylayne /  
bere hym ageyne there as thow fyrst tokest hym /  
And there thow shalt leue hym bounden as he  
is now / And thus he shalle not ete ne deuoure  
the / For he that dothe euylle / euylle he must  
haue /

haue / For Justly he shall ben punyfshed of  
god / they that done harme and dommage to  
the poure folke For who so euer rendreth  
euylle for good / he shalle therof iustly be re-  
warded

**C** The v sable is of the foxe and of the catte /



Here is many folke / whiche auaun-  
een them and saye that they ben  
wyse and subtyle / whiche ben  
grete fooles and knowynge no  
thyng / As this fable reherceth  
Of a foxe whiche som tyme mette with a  
Catte / to whome he sayd / My godsep / god  
geue yow good daye / And the catte answerd /  
my lord god gyue yow good lyf / And thenne  
the foxe demaunded of hym / My godsep what  
canſt thou doo / And the catte sayd to hym /  
I can lepe a lytyl / And the fox sayd to hym /  
Certaynly thou art not worthy to lyue / by cause  
that thou canſt nought doo / And by cause that  
the cat was angry of foxes wordes / he aiked and  
demaunded of the foxe / And thou godsep what  
canſt thou doo / A thousand wyles haue I sayd  
the foxe / For I haue a sak ful of scyences and  
wyles / And I am so grete a clerke / that none  
maye begyle ne deceyue me / And as they were  
thus ſpekyng to gyder the cat perceyued a knyght  
comyng toward them / whiche had many dogges  
with hym / and sayd to the foxe / My godſep /  
certaynly

certaynly I see a knygtt comynge hyther ward /  
whiche ledeth with hym many dogges / the  
whiche as ye wel knowe ben our enemyes / The  
foxe thenne ansuerd to the cat / My godsep /  
thou spekest lyke a coward / and as he that is  
aferd / lete them come and care not thouw / And  
Incontynently as the dogges perceyued and fawe  
the foxe and the catte / they beganne to renne  
vpon them / And whanne the foxe fawe them  
come / he sayd to the kat / Flee we my broder /  
flee we / To whome the kat ansuerd / Certaynly  
godsep / therof is none nede / neuer the les the  
foxe bylued not the cat / but fledde / and ranne  
as fast as he myght for to faue hym / And the  
catte lept vpon a tree and faued hym self /  
fayenge / Now shalle we see / who shalle playe  
best for to preferue and faue hym self / And  
whanne the catte was vpon a tree / he loked  
aboute hym / and fawe how the dogges held the  
foxe with theyr teethe / to whome he cryed and  
seyd / O godsep and subtyle foxe / of thy thow-  
fand wyles that syth late thow coudest doo / lete  
me now fee / and shewe to me one of them /  
the foxe ansuerd not / but was killed of the  
dogges fend the catte was faued / ¶ And ther-  
fore the wyse ought not to desprayse the symple /  
For suche supposeth to be moche wyse whiche  
is a kynd and a very foole /

**C** The vj fable is of the hegoote and of the wulf



**H**e feble ought not to arme hym  
ageynst the stronge / As recyteth  
this present fable of a wulf/ whiche  
some tyme ranne after a hegoot /  
and the hegoot for to faue hym  
lept vpon a rocke / and the wulf besyeged hym /  
**C** And after whan they had duelled there two  
or thre dayes / the wulf beganne to wexe hongry /  
and the hegoot to haue thirst / And thus the  
wulf went for to ete / and the hegoot went for  
to

to drynke / And as the hegoot dranke he fawe  
his shadowe in the water / and speculynge and  
beholdynge his shadowe profered and sayd suche  
wordes within hym self / Thou hast so fayre  
legges / so fayr a berd / and so fayre hornes / and  
haft fere of the wulf / yf hit happed that he  
come ageyne / I shalle corryge hym wel / and  
shalle kepe hym wel / that he shalle haue no  
myght ouer me / ¶ And the wulf whiche held  
hys peas / and herkened what he sayd / toke hym  
by the one legge thus sayenge / what wordes ben  
these whiche thou proferefst & sayst brorder He-  
goote / ¶ And whanne the hegote fawe that  
he was taken / he beganne to faye to the wulf /  
Ha my lord / I saye no thynge / and haue pyte  
of me / I knowe wel / that it is my coulpe / And  
the wulf toke hym by the neck and strangled  
hym / ¶ And therfore it is grete folye whan  
the feble maketh werre ageynſt the puyſſant and  
ſtronge.

**C** The vij fable is of the wulf and of the asse

**M**En ought not to byleue lyghtly the  
cunceylle of hym to whome men  
purposen to lette / As ye maye  
see by this fable / Of a wulf  
whiche somtyme mette with an  
Asse / to the whiche he sayd / My broder I am  
hongry / wherfor I must nedesete the / **C** And  
thenne the Asse ansuerd ryght benyngly / My  
lord / with me thou mayst doo what someuer  
thow wylt / For yf thow etest me / thow shalt  
putte me oute of grete Payne / But I preye the  
yf thow wylt ete me / that thou vouchesauf to  
ete me oute of the way / For wel thow knowest  
that I brynge home the rayfyns fro the vyne /  
and fro the feldes home the corne / **C** Also wel  
thow knowest / that I bere home wood fro the  
forest / And whanne my maister wel do buyld  
somme edyffyce / I must go fetche the stones  
from the montayne / And at the other parte I  
bere the corne vnto the mylle / And after I bere  
home the floure / And for alle short conclusions  
I was borne in a cursyd houre / For to alle Payne  
and to alle grete labours I am submytted & sub-  
get

get to hit / For the whiche I wylle not that  
thow ete me here in the waye for the grete ver-  
goyne and shame that therof myght come to  
me / But I pray the / and Instantly requyre the /  
that thow wylt here my counceytle / whiche is /  
that we two go in to the forest / and thow shalt  
bynde me by thy breste / as thy seruant / And  
I shalle bynd the by thy neck as my mayster  
And thow shalt lede me before the in to the  
wood where someuer thow wylt / to the ende  
that more secretely thow ete me / to the whiche  
counceytle the wulf acorded and sayd / I wylle  
wel that it be donne so / ¶ And whanne they  
were come in to the forest / they bounde eche  
other in the maner as aboue is sayd / ¶ And  
whanne they were wel bounden / the wulf sayd  
to the Aſſe / goo we where thow wylt / and goo  
before for to shewe the waye / And the aſſe  
wente before and ledde the wulf in to the ryght  
waye of his maysters hows / ¶ And whanne the  
wulf beganne to knowe the way / he sayd to the  
aſſe / we goo not the ryght way / to the whiche  
the aſſe ansuerd / ¶ My lord faye not that /  
For certaynly / this is the ryght wey / But for  
alle that / the wulf wold haue gone backward /  
But neuertheleſſ the aſſe ledde hym vnto the  
hows of his mayster / ¶ And as his mayster and  
alle his meynys fawe how the Aſſe drewe the  
wulf

wulf after hym / and wold haue entred in to the  
hows they came oute with staues and clubbes  
and smote on the wulf / ¶ And as one of them  
wold haue caste and smyten a grete stroke vpon  
the wulfs heede / he brake the cord / wherwith  
he was bounden / And so scaped and ranne awey  
vpon the montayne fore hurted and beten / And  
thenne the asse for the grete ioye he hadde of  
that he was so scaped fro the wulf / beganne to  
synge / And the wulf whiche was vpon the  
montayne / & herd the roys of thassle beganne to  
faye in hym self / thow mayst wel cry and calle /  
For I shalle kepe the wel another tyme / that  
thow shalt not bynd me as thow hast done / but  
late gone / ¶ And therfore hit is grete folye to  
byleue the cunceylle of hym / to whome men  
will lette / And to putte hym self in his sub-  
iection / And he that ones hath begyled / must  
kepe hym fro another tyme that he be not de-  
ceyued / For he to whome men purposen to  
doo somme euylle tourn / syth men holden  
hym at auantage / men muste putte him self at  
the vpper syde of hym / And after men shall  
purueye for their cunceylle

¶ The viij fable is of the serpent and of the  
labourer /

HE Auctor of this booke reherceth  
suche another Fable and of suche  
sentence / as the precydent / that  
is to wete / that men shold not  
byleue hym / to whome / men  
hath done eylle / And sayth that somtyme in  
heruest tyme a labourer wente for to see his  
goodes in the feldes / the whiche mette on his  
way a serpent / And with a staf whiche he bare  
in his hand smote the sayd serpent / and gaf hym  
sufe a stroke vpon the heed / that nyghe he  
slewe hym / ¶ And as the serpent felte hym  
self so sore hurted / he wente fro the man / and  
entryd in to his hole / And sayd to the labourer /  
O euylle Frende / thow hast bete me / But I  
warne the / that thow never byleue not hym /  
to the whiche thow hast done ony eylle / Of  
the whiche wordes the labourer made lytyl ex-  
tyme and went forthe on his waye /

¶ It befelle thenne in the same yere / that  
this labourer wente ageyne by that waye / for  
to goo laboure and ere his ground / To whome  
the

the fayd Serpent fayd / ¶ Ha my frend / whyther  
goost thow / And the labourer answerd to hym /  
I goo ere and plowe my ground / And the Ser-  
pent fayd to hym / fowe not to moche / For  
this yere shalle be raynfull and grete habond-  
aunce of waters shalle falle / But bylene not to  
hym / to whome thow haſt ſomtyme done ony  
euylle / And withoute ony wordes the labourer  
wente forthe on his waye / and byleued not the  
ſerpent / but made alle his ground to be cultyned  
and ered / and fowed as moche corne as he  
myghte / In that fame yere felle grete habond-  
aunce of water / wherfore the fayd labourer had  
but lytyl of his corne / For the mooste parte of  
the corne that he had fowen periyſhed that fame  
yere by cauſe of the grete rayne that felle that  
fame yere / ¶ And the next yere after folow-  
ynge / as this labourer paſſyd before the repaire  
or dwellynge place of the fayd Serpent and  
went for to fowe his ground / the Serpent de-  
maunded thenne of hym / My Frend whyther  
goost thow / ¶ And the labourer answerd / I  
goo for to fowe my ground wyth corn and With  
other g[r]aynes ſuche as I hope that ſhallē ben  
necessarie for me in tyme comynge / And thēne  
the Serpent ſaide to hym / My frend fowe but  
lytyl corne / For the Somer next comynge ſhallē  
be ſoo grete and ſoo hote / that by the dryenes and  
hete /

hete / that alle the goodes fowen on the erthe  
shall perysshe But byleue not hym / to whome  
thow hast done ony euylle / ¶ And withoute  
fayenge ony word / the labourer wente / and  
thought on the wordes of the Serpent / ¶ And  
wenynge / that the Serpent hadde soo sayd for  
to deceyue hym / he fowed as moche corne and  
other graynes / as he myght / ¶ And it happed  
that the Somer next folowynge was suche / as  
aboue is sayd / Therfor the man was begyled /  
¶ For he gadred that same yere nothyng /  
¶ And the next yere after folowynge / the sayd  
seasoun as the poure labourer wente ageyne for  
to ere and cultyue his ground the serpent fawe  
hym come fro ferre / ¶ And as he came and  
passid before his repayre he asked of the labourer  
in suche maner / ¶ My friend whyther goost  
thow / And the labourer ansuered / I goo cultyue  
and ere my ground / ¶ And thenne the serpent  
seyd to hym / My Frend sowe not to moche ne  
to lytyl of corne and of other graynes / but sowe  
bytwene bothe / Neuertheles byleue not hym /  
to the whiche thou hast done euyl ¶ And I  
telle the that this yere shalle be the most tem-  
perate and the moost fertyle of alle maner of  
corne / that euer thow sawest / And whanne the  
labourer hadde herd these wordes / he wente  
his waye / and dyd as the Serpent had sayd /  
And

And that yere he gadred moche good / by cause of  
the good disposycion of the season and tyme /  
¶ And on a daye of the same yere / the serpent  
sawe the sayd labourer comynge fro the heruest /  
to whome he came ageynste / And sayd / Now  
faye me my good Frend / Hast thou not fonda  
now grete plente of goodes / as I had told to  
the byfore And the labourer ansuerd and sayd  
ye certaynly / wheroft I thanke the / ¶ And  
thenne the Serpent demaunded of hym Re  
muneration or reward / ¶ And the labourer  
thenne demaunded what he wold haue of hym /  
And the Serpent sayd I ne demaunde of the  
nothynge / but only that to morowe on the  
mornynge thou wylt fende me a dyslh ful of mylk  
by som of thy children / ¶ And thenne the  
serpent shewed to the labourer the hole of his  
dwellyng / & sayd to hym / telle thy sone  
that he brynge the mylke hyther / but take  
good heede to that that other whyle I told to  
the / that thou byleuest not hym / to whome  
thou hast done euylle / ¶ And anone after  
whanne these thynges were sayd / the labourer  
wente homeward / and in the morninge next  
folowynge / he betoke to his sone a dyslhe full  
of mylke / whiche he brought to the serpent /  
and sette the dyslhe before the hool / And  
anone the serpent came oute and flewe the  
child

child through his venym / and when the labourer  
 cam fro the feld / and that he came before the  
 repayre or dwellinge of the serpent / he fond his  
 sonne whiche laye doune deed on the erthe /  
 Thenne beganne the sayd labourer to crye with  
 a hyghe voys / as he that was ful of sorowe and  
 of heuynesse sayinge suche wordes / Ha cursed  
 & euylle serpent / vermyn and fals traytour /  
 thow hast deceyued me / Ha wycked and de-  
 ceytfull beest / ful of all contagyous euyll thow  
 hast sorowfully slayne my sone /

¶ And thenne the serpente sayd to hym / I  
 wylle well / that thow knowe / that I haue not  
 slayne hym forowfully / ne withoute cause / but  
 for to auenge me of that / that thow hurtest me  
 on that other daye withoute cause / and haft not  
 amended hit / Hast thow now memorye / how  
 ofte I sayd to the / that thow sholdest not byleue  
 hym / to whome thow haft done eyyll / haue  
 now thenne in thy memorye / that I am auengyd  
 of the /

¶ And thus this fable sheweth how men ought  
 not to byleue ne berefeythe to them / to whome  
 men hath done somme harme or euylle.

¶ The ix fable is of the foxe / of the wulf / and  
of the lyon /



F hit be soo that ony hath ben adommaged by other he ought not to take vengeance by the tong in gyuyng Inuryous wordes / and the caufe why / is by caufe / that fuche vengeance is dishonest. As to us reherceth this present fable / Somtyme was a foxe / that ete fyshe in a Ryuer / ¶ It happed / that the wulf came that waye / ¶ And whanne he sawe the foxe / whiche ete with so grete appetyte / He beganne to saye / My broder gyue me somme fyshe / And the foxe ansuerd to hym / Allas my lord / It behouveth not that ye ete the releef of my table / but for the worship of your persone I shall counceylle yow wel / Doo soo moche to gete yow a basket / And I shalle teche yow how men shalle take fyshes / to thende / that ye may take somme whan ye shalle be hongry / And the wulf wente in to the streeete / and stalle a basket / whiche he brought with hym / the foxe tooke the basket / and bound it with a cord at the wulfs taylle / ¶ And whanne

whanne he was wel bounden / the foxe sayd  
to the wulf / goo thow by the Ryuer / and I  
shalle lede and take hede to the basket / And  
the wulf dyde as the foxe had hym do / ¶ And  
as the wulf was goynge within the water / the  
foxe fylled the basket fulle of stones by his  
malyce / ¶ And whan the basket was full /  
the foxe sayd to the wulf / Certaynly my lord /  
I maye no more lyfte ne hold the basket / so full  
it is of fyſhe / ¶ And the wulf wenynge that  
the foxe had sayd truthe / profered such wordes /  
fayenge / I render graces and thankes to god /  
that I maye ones see thyn hyghe and excellente  
wysedome in the arte and crafte of fyſhyng /  
¶ And thenne the foxe sayd to hym / My lord  
abyde me here / And I shalle fetche some to  
helpe vs for to haue and take the fyſhe oute  
of the basket / And in fayenge these wordes /  
the foxe ranne in to the strete / where he fond  
men / to whome he sayd in this manere / My  
lordes what doo ye here / why are yow werk-  
leſſ / ſee yonder the wulf / which ete your ſheep /  
your lambes / and your beeftes / and yet now he  
taketh your fyſhes oute of the Ryuer / and  
ete them / ¶ And thenne alle the men came to  
gyder / ſomme with flynges / and ſomme with  
bowes / and other with ſtaues vnto the Ryuer /  
where they fond the wulf / whiche they bete  
outragyously

outragyouslylly / ¶ And whanne the poure wulf  
fawe hym thus oppresled / & vexed with strokes  
begannie with alle his strengthe & myghte to  
drawe / and supposed to haue caryed the fyfthe  
awey / but so strongly he drewe / that he drewe  
and pulled his taylle fro his ers / and thus he  
scaped vnnethe with his lyf / ¶ In the mene-  
whyle thenne happed / that the lyon whiche was  
kynge ouer alle beeftes felle in a grete sekenesse /  
for the whiche cause euery beeft wente for to see  
hym / as theyr lord / ¶ And when the wulf  
would haue gone thyder/ he falewed his lord /  
saying thus to hym / My kynge I falewe yow /  
please it you to knowe that I haue gone round  
aboute the countre and prouynce / and in alle  
places of hit for to serche somme medycynes  
proutfitable for yow / and to recowere your  
helthe / but nothyng I haue found good for  
your sekenesse / but only the skynne of a foxe  
fyers and prowde and malycious / whiche is  
youre body medycynal / but he dayneth not to  
come hyther to see you But ye shalle calle  
hym to a counceylle / and whanne ye hold  
hym / lete his skynne be taken from hym /  
And thenne lete hym renne where he wylle /  
and that fayr skynne which is so holsome / ye  
shalle make hit to be sette and bound vpon  
your bely / And within fewe dayes after hit  
shalle

shalle rendre yow in as good helthe / as euer ye  
were / ¶ And whanne he had sayd these wordes /  
he departed fro the lyon and toke his leue / but  
neuer he had supposid / that the foxe had  
herd hym / but he had / For he was within  
a terryer nyghe to the lodgys of the lyon /  
where he herd alle the propofpcion of the  
wulf / to the whiche he dyd put remedye and  
grete prouyfyon / For as foone as the wulf was  
departed fro the lyon / the foxe wente in to the  
feldes / And in a hyghe way he fond a grete  
donghyll / within the whiche he put hym self /  
¶ And as he supposid after his aduys to be de-  
fowled and dagged ynough / came thus arayed  
in to the pytte of the lyon / the whiche he  
falewed as he oughte to haue done to his lord /  
fayenge to hym in this manere / Syre kynge god  
yeue good helthe / And the lyon ansuerd to hym  
God falewe the swete frend / come nyghe me  
and kyffe me / & after I shalle telle to the somme  
secrete / whiche I wylle not that euery man  
knowe / to whome the foxe sayd in this maner  
Ha a fyre kynge be not displeasyd / for I am to  
fowle arayed and al to dagged / by cause of the  
grete way / whiche I haue gone / sekyng al  
aboute somme good medycyne for you / wher-  
fore it behoueth not me / for to be so nyghe your  
persone For the stenche of the donge myght  
wel

wel greue you for the grete sekenesse that ye  
haue / but dere syre / yf hit please to the or euer  
I come nerer to your Royal mageste I thalle goo  
bathe me and make me fayre and clene / And  
thenne I shall come ageyne to presente my self  
byfore thy noble persone / And notwithstanding  
ynge al this / also er I goo / please the to wete  
& knowe that I come from alle the contrees here  
aboute / and from alle the Royalmes adiacent  
to this prouynce/ for to see yf I coudefynde somme  
good medycyn dyslyng and nedeful to thy sike-  
nesse / and for to recouere thy helthe / but cer-  
tainly I haue foūd no better coūceyll than the  
coūceyll of an aūcyent greke with a grete &  
long berd / a man of grete wydom / sage &  
worthy to be prayfed / the whiche sayd to me/  
how in this prouynce is a wulf withoute taylle/  
the whiche hath lost his taylle by the vertue of  
the grete medycyn whiche is within hym / For  
the whiche thynge it is nedeful and expedyent/  
that ye doo make this wulf to come to yow for  
the recoueraunce of the helthe of your fayr and  
noble body / And whan he is come dysllymelle  
and calle hym to counceyll / saynege that it  
thalle be for his grete worship & proffite / & as  
be thal be nyghe vnto yow cast on hym your  
armed feet / and as swetely as ye maye pulle the  
skynne fro the body of hym & kepe it hoole /  
fauf

sauf only that ye shalle leue the heed and the  
feet / And thenne lete hym gone his way to feche  
his auenture / And forthwith whan ye shalle  
haue that skynne / al hot and warme ye shal do  
bynd hit al aboute your bely / And after that or  
lytyll tyme be pased / your helthe shalle be  
restored to yow / and ye shal be as hole as euer  
in your lyf ye were / ¶ And thenne the foxe  
toke his leue of the kynge / and departed / and  
wente ageyne in to his terryer / ¶ Soone after  
came then the wulf for to see the lyon / And  
Incontynent the lyon called hym to cunceylle /  
and castynge softly his feet vpon hym dyspoyllid  
the wulf of his skynne sauf the skynne of his hede  
and of his feet / And after the lyon bound it al  
warme about his bely / ¶ And the wulf ranne  
aweye skynles / wherfore he had ynough to doo  
to defende and put from hym the flyes / whiche  
greued hym fore / And for the grete destresse  
that he felte by cause of the flyes / that thus ete  
his fleshe / he as wood beganne to renne / and  
pasyd vnder an hylle / vpon the whiche the foxe  
was / ¶ And after whanne the foxe fawe hym /  
he beganne to crye / and calle / lawhyng after  
the wulf / and mocked / and sayd to hym / who  
arte thou that passeth there before with suche a  
fayre hood on thy heed and with ryght fayr  
glouues in thyn handes / Herke herke / what I  
shalle

shalle faye to the / whan thou wente & cameſt  
by the kynges hows / thou werſt bleſſed of the  
lord / & whan thou were at the Court thou her-  
kenefte and alſo fayefte many good wordes and  
good talkynge of al the world /

¶ And therfore my godſep be it euyl or good /  
thow multe al lete paſſe / and goo / and haue  
pacyence in thyn aduerſytye /

¶ And thus this fable theweth vnto vs / that yf  
ony be hurted or dommaged / by ſomme other  
he muſt not auenge hym ſelf by his tonge for  
to make ony trefon / ne for to fay of other ony  
harne ne open blaſphemye / For he ought to  
conſydere / that who fo euer maketh the pytte  
redy for his broder / ofte it happeth that he hym  
ſelf falleth in the fame / and is beten with the  
fame rodde that he maketh for other

**C** The x fable is of the wulf whiche made a fart



T is folye to wene more / than men  
ought to doo / For what formeuer a  
foole thynketh · hit semeth to hym  
that hit shalle be / As it appiereth  
by this fable / of a wulf / whiche  
somtyme rose erly in a mornynge / And after  
that he was rysen vp fro his bedde / as he retched  
hym self / made a grete fart / and beganne to faye  
to hym self / bleffed be god therfore / these ben  
good tydynge / this daye / I shalle be wel  
fortunate and happy / as myn ers syngeth to me /  
And thenne he departed from his lodgys / and  
biganne to walke and goo / & as he wente on his  
way he fonde a sak ful of talowe / whiche a  
woman had lete falle / and with his foote he  
torned hit vpsoun / and sayd to hym / I shalle  
not ete the / For thou sholdest hurte my tendre  
stomak / and more is / I shall this day haue better  
mete / and more delycious / For well I knowe  
this by myn ers / whiche dyd syng it to me /  
And fayenge these wordes went his way / And

anone

anone after he fond a grete pyece of bakon wel  
falted / the whiche he tourned and retourned vp  
sodoune / And whan he had torned and retorne  
hit longe / ynough / he sayd / I dayne not to ete  
of this mete / by cause that hit shold cause me  
for to drynke moche / for it is to falte And as  
myn ers songe to me last I shalle ete this same  
day better and more delycious mete / ¶ And  
thenne he beganne to walke ferther / And as he  
entryd in to a fayr medowe / he sawe a mare /  
and her yong foole with her / and sayd to hym  
self alone / I rendre thankes and graces to the  
goddes of the godes that they send me / For wel  
I wylt and was certayne / that this daye I shold  
synde somme precious mete / And thenne he  
came nyghe the mare and sayd to her / Certaynly  
my suster I shalle ete thy child / And the mare  
ansuerd to hym / My broder doo what someuer  
hit shalle please the / But fyrst I praye the that  
one playfyre thou wylt do to me / I haue herd  
saye that thou art a good Cyrurgyen / wherfore  
I praye the / that thou wylt hele me of my foote /  
I saye to the my good broder / that yester daye  
as I wente within the forest / a thorne entryd in  
to one of my feet behynd / the whiche grenteth  
me fore / I praye the / that or thou ete my  
fool / thou wylt drawe and haue it oute of my  
foote / And the wulf answerd to the mare that  
shalle I doo gladly my good suster / shewe me  
thy

thy foote / ¶ And as the mare shewed his foote  
to the wulf / she gaf to the wulf suche a stroke  
bytwexe bothe his eyen / that alle his hede was  
astonysed and felle doun to the ground / and a  
longe space was the wulf lyenge vpon the erthe /  
as deed / And whanne he was come to hym self  
ageyne / and that he coud speke / he sayd / I care  
not for this myshap / For wel I wote that yet  
this day I shalle ete / and be fylled of delycious  
mete / And in sayenge these wordes lyft hym  
self vp / and wente aweye / ¶ And whanne he  
had walked and gone a whyle / he fond two  
rammes within a medowe whiche with theyr  
hornes laūched eche other / And the wulf sayd  
to hymself / Blessed be god / that now I shal  
be wel fedde / he thenne came nyghe the two  
rammes / & said / Certaynly I shall ete the one  
of you two And one of them sayd to hym /  
My lord doo alle that it plese yow / but fyrst ye  
must gyue vs the sentence of a processe of a  
plee whiche is bytwixe vs bothe / And the wulf  
ansuerd / that with ryght a good wylle he wold  
doo hit / And after sayd to them / My lordes  
telle my your resons and caas / to thende that the  
better I may gyue the sentence of your dyferent  
and question / And thenne one of them beganne  
to say / My lord / this medowe was bylongynge  
to our fader / And by cause that he deyde with-  
oute

oute makyng e ony ordenaunce or testament / we  
be now in debate and stryf for the partynge of  
hit / wherfore we praye the that thou vouche-  
sauf to accorde oure dyferent / so that pees  
be made bytwene vs / And thenne the wulf  
demaunded of the rammes how theyr question  
myght be accorded / Ryght wel sayd one of  
them / by one manere / whiche I shal telle to  
the / yf hit please to the to here me / we two  
shalle be at the two endes of the medowe / and  
thow shalt be in the myddes of it / And fro  
thende of the medowe / we bothe at ones shalle  
renne toward the / And he that fyrst shalle come  
to the / shalle be lord of the medowe / And the  
last shalle be thyn / Wel thene sayd the wulf /  
thyn aduys is good and wel purposyd / late see  
now who fyrst shalle come to me / Thenne wente  
the two rammes to renne toward the wulf / And  
with alle theyr myght came and gaf to hym  
siche two strokes bothe at ones ageynſt bothe  
his sydes / that almost they brake his herte within  
his bely / & then syll doune the poure wulf alle  
aswowned / And the rammes wente theyr way /  
¶ And whanne he was come ageyn to hym self /  
he took courage and departed / fayenge to hym  
self / I care not for alle this Inurye and shame /  
For as myn ers dyde synge to me / yet shalle I  
this day ete somme good and delycious mete /

¶ He

¶ He had not long walked / whanne he fond a  
fowe / and her smal pygges with her / And In-  
contynent as he fawe her / he sayd / blessed be  
god of that I shalle this daye ete and fylle my  
bely with precious metes / and shalle haue good  
fortune / And in that fayenge approched to the  
fowe / & sayd to her / My fuster I must ete  
somme of thy yonge pygges And the fowe wente  
and sayd to hym / my lord I am content of alle  
that / whiche pleafeth to yow / But or ye ete  
them / I praye yow that they maye be baptysed  
and made clene in pure and fayre water / And  
the wulf sayd to the fowe / Shewe me thenne  
the water / And I shalle washe and baptysye  
them wel / And thenne the fowe wente and  
ledde hym at a stange or pond where as was a  
fayr mylle ¶ And as the wulf was vpon the  
lytyl brydge of the sayd mylle / and that he wold  
haue take one pygge / the fowe threwe the wulf  
in to the water with her hede / and for the swyft-  
nesse of the water / he must nedes passe vnder  
the whele of the mylle / And god wote yf the  
wynges of the mylle bete hym wel or not / And  
as foone as he myght / he ranne away / And as  
he ranne feyd to hym self / I care not for soo  
lytyl a shame / ne therfore I shall not be bette/  
but that I shalle yet this daye ete my bely full  
of metes delycious / as myn ers dyd synge it erly  
to

to me / ¶ And as he passed thurgh the strete /  
he fawe somme sheep / and as the shepe fawe  
hym / they entryd in to a stable / ¶ And whan  
the wulf came there he sayd to them in this  
manere / God kepe you my suster / I must ete  
one of yow / to thende / that I may be fylled  
and raslaysyd of my grete honger / And thenne  
one of them sayd to hym / Certaynly my lord /  
ye are welcome to passe / For we ben comen  
hyder for to hold a grete solempnyte / wherfore  
we alle praye yow / that ye pontyfycally wylle  
synge And after the seruyse complete and done /  
doo what ye wyll of the one of vs / & thenne the  
wulf for vayn glory / faynyng to be a prelate be-  
ganne to synge and to howle before the sheep /  
¶ And whanne the men of the toune herd the  
voys of the wulf / they came to the stable with  
grete stanes and with grete dogges / and wonderly  
they wounded the wulf / and almost brought  
hym to deth / that with grete Payne he coude  
goo / neuertheles he scaped / and wente vnder  
a grete tree / vpon the whiche tree was a man  
whiche hewe of the bowes of the tree / The  
wulf thenne beganne to syghe sore / and to make  
grete sorowe of his euylle fortune / and sayd / Ha  
Jupiter how many euyls haue I had and suffred  
this daye / but wel I presume and knowe / that  
hit is by me and by myn owne cause / and by

my

L

my proud thoughte / For the daye in the mornynge I fond a fak ful of talowe / the whiche I dayned not but only smelle hit. And after I fond a grete pycece of bakon / the whiche I wold neuer ete for drede of grete thurst and for my folyshe thought / And therfore yf euylle is syn happed to me it is wel bestowed and employed / My fader was neuer medecyn ne leche/ and also I haue not studyed and lerned in the scyence of medycyn or phisyke/ therfore if it happeth euylle to me / whanne I wold drawe the thorne oute of the mares fote it is wel employed / ¶ Item my fader was neuer neyther patryarke ne Bisshop / and also I was neuer letted / and yet I presumed / and toke on me for to facryfyce and to syng before the goddes / faynyng my self to be a prelate / but after my deserte I was wel rewarded / ¶ Item my fader was no legist ne neuer knewe the lawes / ne also man of Justyce / and to gyue sentence of a plee / I wold entremete me / and fayned my self grete Justycer / but I knewe neyther / a/ ne/ b/ ¶ And yf therfore euylle is come to me / it is of me as of ryght it shold be / O Jupyter I am worthy of gretter punycyon whanne I haue offendis in so many maners / sende thow now to me from thyn hyghe throne a swerd or other vepen /

vepen / wherwith I maye strongly punyſſhe and  
bete me by grete penaunce / For wel worthy I  
am to receyue a gretter descipline / And the  
good man whiche was vpon the tree / herkened  
alle these wordes and deuyſes / and fayd no  
word / ¶ And whanne the wulf had synyſſhed  
alle his ſyghes and complayntes / the good man  
toke his axe / wherwith he had kytte awey the  
dede braunches fro the tre / and caſt it vpon the  
wulf / and it felle vpon his neck in ſuche maner  
that the wulf torned vpsodoun the feet vpward  
and laye as had ben dede / And whan the wulf  
myght releue and dreſſe hym ſelf / he loked and  
byheld vpward to the heuen / and beganne thus  
to crye / Ha Jupiter I ſee now wel that thou  
haſt herd and enhaunced my prayer / and thenne  
he perceyued the man whiche was vpon the tree /  
& wel wende that he had ben Jupiter / And  
thenne with alle his myght he fledde towards  
the forest ſore wounded / and rendred hym ſelf  
to humylyte / and more meke and humble he  
was afterwards than euer before he had ben  
fyers ne prowde / ¶ And by this fable men  
may knowe and ſee that moche reſteth to be  
done of that / that a foole thynketh / And hit  
ſheweth to vs / that whan ſomme good cometh  
to ſomme / it ought not to be reſſufed / For it  
maye

maye not ben recouerd as men wyll / And also  
it sheweth / hou none ought to auaunte hym to  
doo a thynge whiche he can not doo / but ther-  
fore euery man ought to gouerne and rewle  
hym self after his estate and faculte /

**C** The xij fable is of the enuyous dogge /

one ought not to haue enuye of  
good of other / As it appiereth  
by this fable / Of a dogge whiche  
was enuyous / and that somtyme  
was within a stable of oxen / the  
whiche was ful of heye / This dogge kept the  
oxen that they shold not entre in to theyr stable /  
and that they shold not ete of the sayd hey / And  
thenne the oxen sayd to hym / thow arte wel  
peruers and euylle to haue enuye of the good /  
the whiche is to vs nedefull and prouffitable /  
and thow hast of hit nought to doo / for thy  
kynde is not to ete no hey / And thus he dyd of  
a grete bone / the whiche he held at his mouthe /  
and wold not leue hit by cause and for enuye of  
another dogge / whiche was therby / And ther-  
fore kepe the wel fro the company or felauship  
of an enuyous body / For to haue to doo with  
hym hit is moche peryllous and dyffycale / As  
to vs is wel shewen by Lucyfer

¶ The xiij fable is of the wulf and of the  
hongry dogge /



Uche supposen somtyme wynne that  
lesen / As hit appiereth by this  
Fable / For hit is sayd comunly  
that as moche despendeth the  
nygard as the large / As hit ap-  
piereth by this fable of a man whiche had a grete  
herd of sheep / And also he had a dogge for to  
kepe them fro the wulues / To this dogge he gaf  
no mete / for the grete auaryce whiche held hym /  
And therfore the wulf on a daye came to the  
dogge and demaunded of hym the rayson / why  
he was soo lene / and sayd to hym / I see wel  
that thou dyeſt for honger / by cause that thy  
mayſter gyueth the no mete / by his grete scar-  
cyte / but yf thou wylt byleue me I shalle gyue  
to the good coundeylle / And the dogge sayd to  
hym / Certaynly I myſter gretely of good coun-  
caylle / ¶ Thenne the wulf sayd to hym / This  
ſhalt thou doo / Lete me take a lambe / And  
whanne I shalle haue hit I shalle renne awey /  
and whanne thou ſhalt fee me renne / make  
thenne

thenne semblant to renne after me / and lete thy  
self falle faynynge that thou canst not ouertake  
me / for lack and fawte of mete / whiche maketh  
the so feble / And thus whanne the sheepherd  
shalle see that thou mayst not haue the lambe fro  
me by cause of the grete feblenesse and deblyte  
of thy lene body / he shell telle to thy lord that  
thow myghtest not socoure the lambe / by cause  
that thow arte so sore ahongryd / and by this  
means thow thatl haue mete thy bely ful / ¶ The  
dogge thenne acorded this with the wulf / and  
eche of them made and dyde as aboue is sayd /  
¶ And whane the sheep herd sawe the dogge  
falle / suposed wel / that honger was a cause of  
it Forthe whiche cause whanne one of the  
sheep herdes came home he told hit to his mayf-  
ter / And whan the mayster vnderstood hit / he  
sayd as a man wroth for shame / I wylle that  
fro hens forthon he haue breed ynough / ¶ And  
thenne euery daye the sayd dogge hadde soppes  
of brede / and of drye breed he hadde ynough /  
¶ Thenne the dogge toke strengthe / and vygour  
ageyne / ¶ It happed within a lytyl whyle after /  
that the wulf came ageyne to the dogge / and sayd  
to hym / I perceyue wel / that I gaf to the good  
cunceytle / And the dogge sayd to the wulf /  
My broder thou sayst foothe / wherfore I thanke  
the moche / For of hit I hadde grete nede /  
¶ And

¶ And thenne the wulf sayd to hym / yf thou  
wylt I shall gyue to the yet better counceytle /  
And the dogge ansuerd hym with ryght a good  
wylle I shalle here hit / And yf hit be good I  
shalle do after hit / ¶ Thenne sayd the wulf to  
hym Lete me take yet another lambe / and doo  
thy dylygence for to haue hit fro me / and to  
byte me / and I shalle ouerthrowe the thy feet  
vpward / as he that hath no puyffaunce ne  
strength withoute hurtyng of thy self / byleue  
me hardyly / and wel hit shalle happe to the /  
And whanne thy maysters feruaunts shalle haue  
fene thy dylygence / they shal shewen hit to thy  
mayster how that thou shal kepe ful wel his  
folde / yf thou be wel nouryfisched / ¶ And  
thenne the dogge ansuerd to the wulf that he  
was contente / And as hit was sayd / ryght so  
hit was done / and bothe of them maad good  
dylygence The wulf bere aweye the lambe /  
and the dogge renne after hym / and ouertook  
hym / & bote hym fayntly / And the wulf ouer-  
threw the dogge vpsodoune to the ground /  
And whan the sheepherdes sawe gyue suche  
strokes amonge the dogge & the Wulf / sayd  
Certaynly we haue a good dogge / we muste telle  
his dylygence to our mayster / and soo they dyd /  
& how he bote the wulf / and how he was ouer-  
thrown / And yet sayd Certaynly yf he hadde  
hadde

hadde ener mete ynough / the wulf had not  
borne awey the lambe / Thenne the lord com-  
maunded to gyue hym plente of mete / wheroft  
the dogge took ageyne al strengthe and vertue /  
And within a whyle after the wulf came ageyne  
to the dogge / and sayd to hym in this manere /  
My broder haue I not gynen to the good coun-  
ceytle / And thenne the dogge ansuerd to hym /  
Certaynly ye / wheroft I thanke yow / And the  
wulf sayd to the dogge / I praye the my broder  
and my good frend that thow wylt yet gyue  
another lambe / and the dogge sayd to hym /  
Certaynly my broder / wel hit maye suffysse the  
to haue had tweyne of them / ¶ Thenne sayd  
the wulf to the dogge / ¶ At the lefft waye I  
maye haue one for my labour and fallarye / That  
shalt thow not haue sayd the dogge / Haft thow  
not had good fallarye for to haue hadde two  
lambes oute of my maysters herd / ¶ And the  
wulf ansuerd to hym ageyne / My brother gyue  
hit me yf hit please the / ¶ And after sayd the  
dogge to hym / Nay I wylle not / And yf thow  
takeit hit ageynste my wylle / I promytte and  
warne the / that neuer after tyme thow shalt  
ete none / And thenne the wulf sayd to hym /  
Allas my broder I deye for honger / Councaylle  
me for goddys loue what I shalle doo / And the  
dogge sayd to hym / I shal cōuceytle the wel a  
walle

walle of my maysters celer is fallen doune / go  
thyder this nyght and entre in hit / and there  
thow mayst both ete and drynke after thy play-  
syr / For bothe breed fleshe and wyn shalt thou  
fynde at plente there within / And thenne the  
wulf sayd to hym / Allas my broder / beware  
wel thenne / that thow accuse ne deceyue me  
not / And the dogge ansuerd / I waraunt the /  
but doo thy faythe foo prynely / that none of my  
felawes knowe not of hit / ¶ And the wulf  
came at the nyght / and entryd in to the celer /  
and / ete and dranke at his playfyre / In so  
moche that he waxed dronke And whanne he  
hadde dronke soo moche / that he was dronke /  
He sayd to hym self / whanne the vylaynes ben  
fyllid wyth metes / and that they ben dronke /  
they syngi theiร songes / and I wherfore shold  
I not syngi / ¶ And thenne he beganne to crye  
and to howle / And the dogges herd the voys of  
hym wherfore they beganne to barke and to  
howle / And the seruants whiche herd them  
sayd / It is the wulf / whiche is entryd within  
the celer / And thenne they al to gyder wenten  
thyder / and kylled the wulf / And therfore  
more despendeth the nygard than the large /  
For auaryce was neuer good / For many one  
ben whiche dare not ete ne drynke as nature  
requyreh / But neuertheles euery one oughte  
to

to use and lyue prudently of all suche goodes  
as god sendeth to hym / This fable also sheweth  
to vs / that none ought to do ageynste his kynde /  
as of the wulf whiche waxed dronke / for the  
whiche cause he was slayne

¶ The xiij fable maketh menegon of the fader  
and of his thre children

**H**E is not wyse / whiche for to haue  
vanyte and his plesyr taketh debate  
or stryf / As hit appiereth by this  
fable / Of a man whiche hadde  
thre children / and at the houre  
of his dethe he byquethed / and gaf to them his  
herytage or lyuehode / that is to wete a grete  
pere tree / a gote & a mylle / ¶ And whanne  
the fader was deed / the bretheren assembled  
them thre to gyder / and wente before the Juge  
for to parte their lyuehode / and sayd to the  
Juge / My lord the Juge / Oure fader is dede  
whiche hath byquethed to vs thre bretheren al  
his herytage and as moche of hit shold haue  
the one as the other And thenne the Juge  
demaunded / what was theyr lyuehode / And  
they ansuerd a pere tree / a gote and a mylle /  
And thenne the Juge sayd to them / that they  
shold sette and make partyes egal of your lyue-  
lede / And the one to haue as moche of hit as  
the other / hit is a thynge moche dyffycyle to  
doo / but to your aduys how shold ye parte it /  
And

And thenne the eldest of the three bretheren  
spake and sayd / I shalle take fro the pere tree  
alle that is croked and vpright / And the second  
sayd / I shalle take fro the pere tree alle that is  
grene and drye / And the thyrd sayd I shalle  
haue alle the rote / the pulle or maste and alle  
the branches of the pere tree / ¶ And thenne  
the Juge sayd to them / He that thenne shalle  
haue the most parte of the tree / lete hym be  
Juge / For I ne none other may know ne  
vnderstante who shalle haue the more or lesse  
parte / And therfore he that can or shalle proue  
more openly / that he hath the most parte shal  
be lord of the tree / ¶ And after the Juge de-  
maunded of them / how that theyr fader had  
deuyfed to them the gote / And they sayd to  
hym / he that shalle make the fayrest prayer and  
request must haue the gote / And thene the  
fyrste broder made his request / and sayd in this  
manere / wold god that the goot were now soo  
grete that the myght drynke alle the water  
whiche is vnder the cope of heuen / And that  
whanne she hadde dronken it / she shold yet be  
fore thursty ¶ The second sayd / I suppose that  
the gote shalle be myn / For a fayrer demaunde  
or request than thyn is I shalle now make / ¶ I  
wold / that alle the hempe / and alle the Flaxe  
and alle the wulle of the worlde were made in

one

one threed alone / And that the Gote were so  
grete / that with that fame threde men myght  
not bynde one of his legges / ¶ Thenne sayd  
thirdde / yet shalle be myn the gote / ¶ For I  
wolde / that he were soo grete / that yf an Egle  
were at the vppermost of the heuen / he myght  
occupye and haue thenne as moche place as the  
Egle myght loke and see in hyght / in lengthe and  
in breed / ¶ And thenne the Juge fayde to them  
thre / who is he of yow thre / that hath maade the  
fayrest prayer / Certaynly I nor none other canne  
not saye ne gyue the Jugement / And therfore  
the goote shalle be bylongynge to hym that of  
hit shalle say the trouthe ¶ And the Mylle how  
was hit deuyfed by your Fader for to be parted  
amonge yow thre / ¶ And they ansuerde and  
sayde to the Juge / He that shalle be moost lyer /  
mooste euylle and most flowe ought to haue hit /  
¶ Thenne say the eldest sone / I am moost flow-  
full / For many yeres I haue dwellyd in a grete  
hous / and laye vnder the conduytes of the same /  
oute of the whiche felle vpon me alle the fowle  
waters / as pyffe / dysshe water / and alle other  
fylthe that wonderly stanke / In so moche that  
al my fleshe was roten therof / and myn eyen  
al blynd / and the durt vnder my back was a foot  
hyghe / And yet by my grete flouthe I hadde  
leuer to abyde there / than to tourne me / and  
haue lyfte me vp ¶ The

¶ The second sayd / I suppose wel / that the mylle shalle be myn / For yf I had fasted twenty yere / And yf I hadde come to a table couerd of al maner of precious and delyate metes / therof I myght wel ete yf I wold take of the best / I am so flouthfull that I maye not ete Withoute one shold putte the mete in to my mouthe /

¶ And the thyrde sayd / the mylle shalle be myn / For I am yet a gretter lyar and more flouthfull / than ony of yow bothe / For yf I hadde ben athurst vnto the dethe / And yf I found thenne my self within a fayre water into the neck / I wold rather deye / than to meue ones my heed for to drynke therof only one drop / ¶ Thenne sayd the Juge to them / Ye wote not what ye faye / For I nor none other maye not wel vnderstante yow / But the cause I remytte and put amonge yow thre / And thus they wente withoute ony sentence / For to folyshe demaunde behoueth a folyshe ansuere

¶ And therfore they ben fooles that wylle plete suche vanyte one ageynste other / And many one ben fallen therfore in grete pouerte / For for a lytyl thyng ought to be made a lytyl plee

¶ The xiij fable is of the wulf and of the foxe



One maye not be mayster without  
he haue be fyrsyte a discipole / As  
hit appiereth by this Fable / Of  
a Foxe whiche came toward a  
wulf / and sayd to hym / My lord  
I praye yow that ye wylle be my godsep /  
And the wulf ansuerd / I am content / And the  
foxe toke to hym his sone prayenge hym that to  
his sone he wold shewe and lerne good doctryne /  
the whiche the wulf tooke / and wente with hym  
upon a montayne / And thenne he sayd to the  
lytyll foxe whanne the beestes shalle come to the  
feldes calle me / And the foxe wente and fawe  
fro the top of the hylle / how the beestes were  
comyng to the feldes / and forth with he wente  
and called his godfader / and sayd My godfader  
the beestes comen in to the feldes / And the wulf  
demaunded of hym / what bestes are they / and  
the fox ansuerd / they be bothe kyne & fwyn to  
gyder / Wel sayd the wulf / I gyue no force for  
them / lete them go for the dogges ben with  
them / And soone after the foxe dyd loke on  
another syde / and perceyued the mare whiche  
wente

wente to the feldes / and he wente to his godfader & fayd / godfader the mare is goo to the feldes / & the wulf demaunded of hym where aboue is the / And the foxe ansuered the is by the forest / And the wulf sayd / Now go we to dyner / And the wulf with his godsone entryd in to the wood / and came to the mare / ¶ The wulf perceyued wel and sawe a yonge colt / whiche was by his moder / the wulf tooke hym by the neck with his teethe and drewe hit within the wood / and ete & deuoured hym bytwene them bothe / ¶ And whan they had wel eten the godson sayd to his godfader / My godfader I commaunde yow to god and moche I thanke yow your doctrine / For wel ye hane taught me / in so moche / that now I am a grete clerke / & now I wylle goo toward my moder / And thenne the wulf sayd to his godson / My godsone yf thou gost awey / thou shalt repento the therfore / For thou haft not yet wel studyed / and knowest not yet the Sylogysmes / ¶ Ha my godfader sayd the Foxe / I knowe wel al / ¶ And the wulf sayd to hym / Sythe thou wylt goo / to god I commaunde the /

¶ And whanne the Foxe was come toward his moder / she sayd to hym / Certaynly / thou haft not yet studyed ynough / ¶ And he thenne sayd to her / Moder I am soo grete a clerke that

I can cast the deuylle fro the clyf / Lete vs go  
chace / and ye shalle see yf I haue lerned ought  
or not / ¶ And the yong foxe wold haue done  
as his godfader the wulf dede / and said to his  
moder / make good watche / ¶ And whanne  
the beeftes shalle come to the feld / lete me  
haue therof knowlege / And his moder sayd /  
wel my sone so shalle I doo / She maade good  
watche / And whanne she fawe that bothe kyne  
and swyne wente to the feldes / she sayd thenne  
to hym My sone the kyne and the swyn to gyder  
ben in the feldes / And he ansuerd / My moder  
of them I retche not / lete them goo / for the  
dogges kepe them wel / ¶ And within a short  
whyle after / the moder fawe come the mare  
nyghe vnto a wode / and wente / and sayd to  
her sone / My sone the mare is nigh the wood  
And he ansuerd / My moder these ben good  
tydynge / Abyde ye here / For I goo to fetche  
our dyner / and wente and entred in to the  
Wode / And after wold doo as his godfader  
dyd before / and wente and tooke the mare by  
the neck / But the mare tooke hym with her  
teeth / and bare hym to the sheepherd And  
the moder cryed from the top of the hylle /  
My sone lete goo the mare / and come hyder  
ageyne / but he myght not / For the mare  
held hym fast with her teethe / ¶ And as the  
sheepherde

shepherde came for to kylle hym / the moder  
cryed and sayd wepynge / Allas my sone thou  
dydest not lerne wel / And hast ben to lytel  
a whyle atte schole / wherfore thou must now  
deye myserably / And the sheepherdes took and  
flew hym / For none ought to say hym self  
mayster withoute that he haue syrst studyed /  
For some wene to be a grete clerke / that can  
nothyng of clergye /

¶ The xv fable is of the dogge / of the wulf and  
of the whether



Rete folye is to a fool that hath no myght / that wylle begyle another stronger thā hym self/ as reherceth this fable of a fader of famylle whiche had a grete herd or flock of sheep / and had a grete dogge for to kepe them which was wel stronge / And of his voys all the wolues were aferd wherfore the sheepherd slepte more surely/ but it happed/ that this dogge for his grete age deyde/ wherfore the sheepherdes were sore troubled and wrothe/ and sayd one to other/ we shall no more slepe at oure ease by cause that our dogge is dede / for the wulues shall now come and ete our sheep/ ¶ And thenne a grete wether fyers and prowde/ whiche herd alle these wordes came to them and sayd / I shalle gyue yow good cunceyll/ Shau me/ and put on me the skynne of the dogge And whanne the wulues shalle see me/ they shalle haue grete fere of me/ ¶ And whanne the wulues came and sawe the wether clothed with the skynne of the dogge/ they

they beganne all to flee / and ranne awey / ¶ It  
happ'd on a day that a wulf whiche was fore  
hongry / came and toke a lambe / and after ran  
awaye therwith / ¶ And thenne the sayd wether  
ranne after hym / And the wulf whiche supposed  
that it had ben the dogge shote thryes by the  
waye for the grete fere that he had / And ranne  
euer as fast as he coude / and the wether also  
ranne after hym withoute cesse / tyl that he  
ranne thurgh a bushe full of sharp thornes / the  
whiche thornes rente and brake alle the dogges  
skynne / whiche was on hym / And as the wulf  
loked and sawe behynde hym / beyng moche  
doubtous of his dethe / sawe and perceyued alle  
the decepcion and falschede of the wether / And  
forthwith retorneid ageynste hym / and demaunded  
of hym / what beeft arte thou / And the wether  
ansuerd to hym in this maner / My lord I am a  
wether whiche playeth with the / And the wulf  
sayd / Ha mayster ought ye to playe with your  
mayster and with your lord / thou hast made me  
so sore aferd / that by the waye as I ranne before  
the / I dyte thyte thre grete toordes / And thene  
the wulf ledde hym unto the place where as he  
had shyte / sayenge thus to hym / loke hyther /  
callest thou this a playe / I take hit not for playe /  
For now I shalle shewe to the / how thou ought-  
est not to playe so with thy lord / And thenne  
the

the wulf took and kylled hym / and deuoured  
and ete hym / ¶ And therfore he that is wyse  
mufte take good hede / how he playeth with  
hym whiche is wyfer / more sage / and more  
stronge / than hym self is /

C The xvij fable maketh meneyon of the man / of  
the lyon & of his sone

**H**E that refuseth the good doctryne  
of his fader / yf euyl happe cometh  
to hym / it is but ryght / As to vs  
reherceth this fable of a labourer /  
whiche somtyme lyued in a deserte  
of his cultuyng and laboure / In this deserte  
was a lyon / whiche wasted and destroyed all  
the fede / which euery daye the sayd labourer  
fewed / and also this lyon destroyed his trees /  
And by cause that he bare and dyd to hym so  
grete harme and dommage / he made an hedge /  
to the whiche he putte and sette cordes and  
nettes for to take lyon / And ones as this lyon  
came for to ete corne he entryed within a nette /  
& was taken / And thenne the good man came  
thyder / and bete and smote hym so wonderly /  
that vnnethe he myght scape fro deth / And by  
cause that the lyon sawe that he myght not  
escape the subtylyte of the man / he took his  
lytyl lyon / and went to dwelle in another  
Regyon / and within a lytyl whyle after that  
the lyon was wel growen and was syers &  
strengē

stronge he demaunded of his fader/ My fader  
be we of this Regyon/ Nay sayd the fader/  
For we ben fledde awey fro oure land/ And  
thenne the lytyl lyon asked/ wherfore/ And  
the fader anfuerd to hym/ For the subtylyte of  
the man/ And the lytyl lyon demaunded of  
hym what man is that/ And his fader sayd to  
hym/ he is not foo grete ne so stronge as we  
be/ but he is more subtyle and more Ingenyous/  
than we be/ and thene sayd the sone to the  
fader/ I shalle goo auenge me on hym And  
the grete lyon sayd to hym/ goo not/ For yf  
thow goest thyder thow shalt repente the ther-  
fore/ and shalt doo lyke a fole And the sone  
anfuerd to his fader / Ha by my heed I shalle goo  
thyder/ and shalle see what he can doo/ And  
as he wente for to fynde the man/ he mette an  
oxe within a medowe/ and an hors whose back  
was al fleyen/ and sore/ to whome he said in  
this manere/ who is he that hath ledde yow  
hyder/ and that so hath so hurted yow/ And  
they sayd to hym/ It is the man/ ¶ And  
thenne he sayd ageyne to them/ Certaynly/  
here is a wonder thynge/ I praye yow/ that  
ye wylle shewe hym to me And they wente  
and shewed to hym the labourer/ which ered  
the erthe/ And the lyon forthwith and with-  
oute sayinge of ony moo wordes wente toward  
the

the man / to whome he sayd in this maner /  
Ha man thou hast done ouer many euyls /  
bothe to me and to my Fader / and in lyke  
wyse to oure beesies / Wherfore I telle the that  
to me thou shalt doo Justyce / And the man  
ansuerd to hym / I promytte and warne the /  
that yf thou come nyghe me I shalle flee with  
this greete clubbe / And after with this knyf I  
shall flee the / And the lyon sayd to hym /  
Come thenne before my fader / and he as kynge  
shalle doo to vs good Justyce / And thenne the  
man sayd to the lyon / I am content / yf that  
thow wylt swere to me / that thow shalt not  
touche me / tyll that we ben in the presence of  
thy fader / And in lyke wyse I shalle swere to  
the / that I shal go with the vnto the presence  
of thy fader / And thus the lyon and the man  
swered eche one to other / and wente toward  
the grete lyon / and the man beganne to goo  
by the way where as his cordes and nettes were  
dressed / And as they wente / the lyon lete hym  
self falle within a corde / and by the feet he was  
take / so that he myghte not farther goo / And  
by cause he coude not goo he sayd to the man /  
O man I prey the that thou wilt helpe me /  
For I may no more goo / And the man ansuerd  
to hym / I am sworne to the that I shalle not  
touche the vnto the tyme that we ben before thy  
fader /

fader / And as the lyon supposid to haue vnbound  
hym self for to scape / he fylle in to another nette  
And thenne the lyon beganne to crye after the  
man / fayenge to hym in this manere / O good  
man I praye the that thou wilt vnbynde me /  
And the man beganne to smynte hym vpon the  
hede / ¶ And thenne whanne the lyon fawe  
that he myght not scape / he sayd to the man /  
I praye the / that thou smyte me no more vpon  
the heed / but vpon myn erys / by cause that I  
wold not here the good cunceylle of my fader /  
And thenne the man beganne to smynte hym at  
the herte and flewe hym / the whiche thyng  
happeth ofte to many children whiche ben  
hanged or by other maner executed and put to  
dethe / by cause that they wil not byleue the  
doctrayne of theyr faders and moders / ne obeye  
to them by no wyse

**C** The xvi fable is of the knyght and of the  
scrwaunt / the whiche sond the Foxe /



Any ben that for theyr grete lesynges  
supposen to put vnder alle the  
world / but euer at last theyr le-  
synges ben knownen and many-  
fested / as hit appiereth by this  
fable of a knyght whiche somtyme wente with  
an archer of his thurgh the lande / And as they  
rode / they fonde a Foxe / And the knyght sayd  
to the archer in good soothe I see a grete Foxe /  
And the archer beganne to faye to his lord / My  
lord / merueylle ye therof / I haue ben in a Regyon  
where as the Foxes ben as grete as an oxe / And  
the knyght ansuerd In good soothe theyr skynnes  
were good for to make mantels with / yf skynners  
myght haue them / And as they were rydynge /  
they felle in many wordes and deuyses / And  
thenne by cause the knyght perceyued wel the  
lesynge of his Archer / he beganne to make  
preyers and orysons to the goddes / for to make his  
Archer aferd / And sayd in this manere / O Jupiter  
god almyghty / **C**I preye the / that this daye  
thow wylt kepe vs fro all lesynges / so that we may  
faul

sauf pasſe thys flood and this grete Ryuer whiche  
is here before vs / and that we may surely come  
to oure hows / And whanne the Archer herd  
the prayer and oryson of his lord / he was moche  
abafſhed ¶ And thenne the Archer demaunded  
of hym / my lord wherfore prayest thou now foo  
deuoutely / And the knygt ansuerd wost thou not  
wel that hit is wel knownen and manyfested / that  
we foone must pasſe a ryght grete Ryuer / And  
that he who on al this daye shalle haue made ony  
lefynge / yf he entre in hit / he shalle neuer come  
oute of hit ageyne / Of the whiche wordes the  
Archer was moche doubtous and dredeful / And  
as they had ryden a lytyl waye / they fond a lytyl  
Ryuer / wherfore the Archer demaunded of his  
lord / Is this the flood whiche we must pasſe / Nay  
sayd the knyght / For hit is wel gretter / O my  
lord I faye by caufe that the foxe whiche ye fawe  
may wel haue fwymmed and pasſed ouer this lytyl  
water / And the lord sayd / I care not therfore /  
¶ And after that they had ryden a lytyl ferther /  
the fond another lytyll Ryuer / And the Archer  
demaunded of hym / Is this the flood that ye spake  
of to me / Nay sayd he / For hit is gretter &  
more brode / And the Archer sayd ageyne to  
hym / My lord I fay fo / by caufe that the foxe  
of the whiche I spake of to daye was not gretter  
than a calf / ¶ And thene the knyght herkyng  
the

the dysfymylacion of his archer / answerd not /  
And soo they rode forthe so longe that they fonde  
yet another Ryuer And thenne the Archer  
demaunded of his lord / Is this the same hit /  
Nay sayd the knyght / but soone we thalle come  
thereto / O my lord I saye so by cause that the  
Foxe wherof I spak to yow this daye / was not  
gretter than a sheep / ¶ And when they had  
ryden vnto euen tyme they fonde a grete Ryuer  
and of a grete brede / ¶ And whan tharcher  
sawe hit / he began al to shake for fere / and de-  
maunded of his lord / My lord is this the Ryuer /  
Ye sayd the knyght / O my lord I ensure you on  
my feythe / that the Foxe of the whiche I spake  
to daye / was not gretter than the Foxe / whiche  
we sawe to day / wherfore I knowlege and con-  
fesse to yow my synne / ¶ And thenne the knyght  
beganne to smyle / and sayd to his Archer in this  
manere / Also this Ryuer is no wors than the  
other whiche we sawe to fore and haue passed  
thurgh them / And thenne the archer had grete  
vergoyne and was shameful / by cause that he  
myght no more couere his lesynge / And ther-  
fore hit is fayre and good for to faye euer the  
trouthe / and to be trewe bothe in speche and in  
dede / For a lyer is euer begyled / and his le-  
synge is knownen and manyfested on hym to his  
grete shame & dommage

¶ Here

¶ Here after folowen some Fables of Elape  
after the newe translacion / the whiche  
Fables ben not founden ne wretton  
in the bookeſ of the philoſopher Romulus

**C** The syrftable is of the Egle and of the  
rauen

**N**One ought to take on hym self to  
doo a thynge / whiche is peryllous  
without he fele hym self strong  
ynouȝ to doo hit / As reherceth  
this Fable / Of an Egle / whiche  
fleynge took a lambe / wherof the Rauen hadde  
grete enuye wherfor vpon another tyme as / the  
sayd rauen sawe a grete herd of sheep / by his  
grete enuy & pryd & by his grete oultrace de-  
scended on them / And by suche fachon and  
manere smote a wether that his clowes abode to  
the flyes of hit / In soo moche that he coude  
not flee awhey / The sheep herd thenne came and  
brake and toke his wynges from hym / And after  
bare hym to his children to playe them with /  
And demaunded of hym / what byrd he was /  
And the Rauen ansuerd to hym / I supposed to  
haue ben an Egle / And by my ouerwenyng I  
wende to haue take a lambe / as the egle dyd /  
but now I knowe wel that I am a Rauen / wher-  
fore the feble ought not in no wyse to compare  
hym

hym self to the stronge / For somtyme when he  
supposeth to doo more than he may / he falleth  
in to grete deshonour / as hit appiereth by this  
present Fable / Of a Rauen / whiche supposen  
to haue ben as stronge as the egle

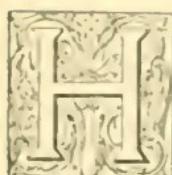
**C** The second Fable is of the egle and of the  
wesel



One for what so euer myght that  
he haue / ought not to despreyse  
the other / As hit appiereth by  
this present fable of an Egle /  
whiche chaced somtyme after an  
hare And by cause that the hare myght not  
relyste ne withstande ageynst the egle / he de-  
maunded ayde and helpe of the wesel / the whiche  
tooke hym in her kepynge / And by cause that  
the egle sawe the wesel soo lytyl / he despreyfed  
her / and before her toke the hare / wherof the  
wesel was wrothe / And therfore the wesell wente /  
and beheld the Egles nest whiche was vpon a  
hyghe tree / And whanne she sawe hit / the lytell  
wesell clymmed vpon a tree / and toke and cast  
doun to the ground the yonge egles wherfore  
they deyde / And for this cause was the Egle  
muche wrothe and angry / and after wente to the  
god Jupiter And prayd hym that he wold fynde  
hym a sure place where as he myght leye  
his egges and his lytyl chykynes / And Jupiter  
graunted hit and gaf hym suche a gyfte / that  
whan

whan the tyme of childynge shold come / that  
she shold make her yong Egles within his bosome /  
And thenne whanne the wesel knewe this / she  
gadred and assembled to gyder grete quantite of  
ordure of fylthe / and therof made an hyghe hylle  
for to lete her self falle fro the top of hit in to  
the bosome of Jupiter / And whanne Jupiter  
felte the stenche of the fylthe / he beganne to  
shake his bosome / and both the wesel and the  
egges of the egle felle doun to the erthe / And  
thus were alle the egges broken and lost / And  
whanne the Egel knewe hit / she made auowe /  
that she shold neuer make none egles / tyll of  
the wesel she were asluerd / And therfore none  
how stronge and myghty that he be / ought not  
despreyse somme other / For there is none soo  
lytyl / but that somtyme he may lette and auenge  
hym self / wherfore doo thou ne desplaysfyr to  
none / that desplaysfyre come not to the

**C** The thyrde fable is of the Foxe and of  
the gote



E whiche is wyse and sage ought  
fyrst to loke and behold the ende /  
or he begynneth the werke or  
dede / as hyer appiereth by this  
fable / Of a foxe & of a gote /  
that somtyme descended and wente dounie in  
to a depe welle / for to drynke. And Whanne  
they had wel dronke / by cause that thei coude  
not come vpward ageyne / the Foxe sayd to the  
gote in this maner / my frend yf thou wylt helpe  
me / we shall sone ben bothe oute of this welle /  
For yf thou wylt fette thy two feet ageynste the  
walle / I shal wel lepe vpon the / & vpon thy  
hornes And thenne I shal lepe oute of this  
welle / **C**And whanne I shalle be oute of hit /  
thow shalt take me by the handes / and I shal  
plucke and drawe the oute of the welle / And  
at this request the gote / acorded and ansuerd /  
I wylle wel / And thene the gote lyfte vp his  
feet ageynst the walle / and the foxe dyd so  
muche by his malyce that he got out of the  
welle / And whan he was oute / he began to  
loke

loke on the gote / whiche was within the welle /  
& thenne the gote fayd to hym / help me now  
as thow hast promyfed / And thene the foxe  
beganne to lawhe and to scorne hym / and fayd  
to hym / O mayster goote / yf thou haddest be  
wel wyse with thy fayre berde / or euer thou  
haddest entryd in to the welle / thou sholdest  
fyrst haue taken hede / how thou sholdest haue  
comen oute of hit ageyne /

¶ And therfore he whiche is wyse / yf he  
wysely wylle gourerne hym self / ought to take  
euer good hede to the ende of his werke

**C** The fourthe fable is of the catte and of  
the chyken.

**H**E whiche is fals of kynde / & hath  
begonne to deceyue some other /  
euer he wyl use his craft / As it  
appiereth by this present Fable  
of a kat whiche somtyme toke a  
chyken / the whiche he beganne strongly to  
blame / for to haue fonde somme cause that he  
myght ete hit / and sayd to hym in this manere /  
Come hyther thou chyken / thow dost none  
other good but erye alle the nyght / thow  
letest not the men slepe / And thenne the chyken  
ansuerd to hym / I doo hit for theyre grete  
prouffite / And ouer ageyne the catte sayd to  
hym / yet is there wel wors / For thow arte  
an inceste & lechour For thow knowest natu-  
rellly both thy moder and thy daughter And  
thenne the chyken sayd to the cat / I doo hit  
by cause that my mayster maye haue egges for  
his etynge / And that hys mayster for his prou-  
ffyte gaf to hym bothe the moder and the  
daughter for to multyple the egges / And  
thenne the catte sayd to hym / by my feythe  
godlicp

godsep thou hast excusacions ynough / but  
neuertheless thou shalt passe thurgh my throte /  
for I suppose not to faste this day for alle thy  
wordes / ¶ And thus is it of hym whiche is  
custommed to lyue by rauyn / For he can not  
kepe ne absteyne hym self fro hit / For alle  
thexcafacions that be leyd on hym.

¶ The v fable is of the Foxe and of the bushe.



En ouȝt not to demaude ne aske  
help of them that ben more cus-  
tomed to lette than to do good  
or prouifit / as it appereth by this  
fable of a fox which for to scape  
the peril to be taken wente vpon a thorne  
bushe / whiche hurted hym sore / And wepyng  
sayd to the bushe / I am come as to my  
refuge vnto the / and thou hast hurted me vnto  
the dethe / And thenne the bushe sayd to hym /  
thow haſt erred / and wel thou haſt begyled  
thy ſelf / For thow ſuppoſest to haue taken me  
as thow arte cuſtommed to take chekyns and  
hennes / ¶ And therfore men ought not to  
helpe them whiche ben acuſtomed to doo euylle /  
but men ought rather to lette them.

**C**The vj fable is of the man and of the god of  
the wodes



F the euylle mansom tyme prouffiteth  
sōme other / he doth hit not by  
his good wylle / but by force / As  
reherceth to vs this fable / Of a  
man whiche had in his hows an  
yдолле the whiche oftyme he adoured as his god /  
to whome ofte he prayed that he wold gyue to  
hym moche good And the more that he prayed  
hym / the more he faylled / And became pouere/  
wherfore the man was wel wrothe ageynst his  
yдолле / and took hit by the legges / and smote  
the hede of hit so strongly ageynst the walle / so  
that it brake in to many pyeces/ Oute of the  
whiche yдолле ysued a ryght grete tresoure/  
wheroft the man was ful gladde and Joyous/  
And thenne the man sayd to his yдолле / Now  
knowe I wel / that thou art wycked / euyl and  
peruers / For whanne I haue worshipped the /  
thow haft not holpen me / And now whanne I  
haue bete the / thow haft moche done for me /  
**C**And therfore the euylle man whanne he doth  
ony good / it is not of his good wylle / but by  
force

**C** The viij fable is of a fyfher



Lle thynges which ben done & made  
in theyr tyme & season ben wel  
made / as by this present fable it  
appereþ Of a fyfher whiche som-  
tyme touched his bagpype nyhe

the Ryuer for to make the fyfhe to daunce /

**C** And whan he sawe that for none songe that  
he coude pype / the fyfhes wold not daūſe / As  
wroth dyd cast his nettes in to the Ryuer / & toke  
of fyfhe grete quantite / And whanne he had  
drawe oute his nettes oute of the water / the  
fyfhe beganne to lepe and to daūſe / and thenne  
he sayd to them / Certaynly hit appiereth now  
wel / that ye be euylle beesles / For now whanne  
ye be taken / ye lepe and daunſe / And whanne  
I pyped and played of my muse or bag pype ye  
dayned / ne wold not daunſe / Therfore hit ap-  
piereth wel that the thynges whiche ben made  
in season / ben wel made and done by reaſon

¶ The eyght fable is of the catte and of the rat

**H**E whiche is wyse / and that ones  
hath ben begyled / ought not to  
truste more hym that hath begyled  
hym As reherceth this Fable of a  
catte whiche wente in to a hows /  
where as many rats were / the whiche he dyd  
ete eche one after other / ¶ And whanne the  
rats perceyued the grete fyersnes and crudelyte  
of the catte / held a cunceytle to gyder where  
as they determinyd of one comyn wylle / that  
they shold no more hold them ne come nor goo  
on the lowe floore . wherfore one of them moost  
auncyent profered and sayd to al the other suche  
wordes / ¶ My bretheren and my frendes / ye  
knowe wel / that we haue a grete enemye / whiche  
is a grete persecutour ouer vs alle / to whome we  
may not resyste / wherfor of nede we must hold  
our self vppn the hyghe balkes / to thende that  
he may not take vs / Of the whiche propofycion  
or wordes the other rats were wel content and  
apayd / and byleuyd this cunceytle / And whanne  
the kat knewe the cunceytle of the rats / he  
hyngē hym self by his two feet behynd at a pynne  
of

of yron whiche was flyked at a balke / feynynge  
hym self to be dede / And whanne one of the  
rats lokynge dounward sawe the katte beganne  
to lawhe and sayd to the cat / O my Frend yf  
I supposed that thow were dede / I shold goo  
doune / but wel I knowe the so fals & peruers /  
that thow mayst wel haue hanged thy self / fayn-  
ynge to be dede / wherfore I shall not goo doune /  
And therfore he that hath ben ones begyled by  
somme other / ought to kepe hym wel fro the  
same

**C** The ix fable is of the labourer and of the  
pyelarge



E whence is taken with the wicked  
and euyll ouȝte to suffre payne  
and punycyon as they / As it  
appiereth by this fable / Of a la-  
bourer whence somtyme dressyd  
and sette his gynnes and nettes for to take the  
ghees and the cranes / Whiche ete his corne / It  
happed thenne that ones amonge a grete meyny  
of ghees and cranes / he took a pyelarge / whiche  
prayd the labourer in this maner / I praye the  
lete me go / For I am neyther goos ne cranne  
nor I am not come hyther for to do the ony  
eylle / The labourer beganne thenne to lawhe/  
and sayd to the pyelarge / yf thou haddest not be  
in theyr felauship / thou haddest not entryd in to  
my nettes / ne haddest not be taken / And by  
cause that thou arte founde and taken with them /  
thow shalt be punyfished as they shalle be Ther-  
fore none ought to hold companye with the euylle  
with oute he wylle suffre the punycion of them  
whiche ben punyfished

**C** The tenth fable is of the child / whiche kepte  
the sheep

**H**E whiche is accustomed to make less-  
ynges / how be it that he saye  
trouthe / Yet men byleue hym  
not / As reherceth this fable / Of  
a child whiche somtyme kepte  
sheep / the whiche cryed ofte withoute cause /  
fayenge / Allas for goddes loue focoure yow me /  
For the wulf wylle ete my sheep / And whanne  
the labourers that cultyued and ered the erthe  
aboute hym / herd his crye / they come to helpe  
hym / the whiche came so many tymes / and fond  
nothyng / And as they sawe that there were no  
wulues / they retorne to theyr labourrage / And  
**C** It happed on a day that the wulf came / and  
the child cryed as he was accustomed to doo /  
And by cause that the labourers supposed / that  
hit had not ben trouthe / abode stille at theyr  
laboure / wherfore the wulf dyd ete the sheep /  
For men bileyue not lyghtly hym / whiche is  
knownen for a lyer

¶ The xij fable is of the ante and of the columbe



One ought to be flowful of the good  
whiche he receyueth of other / As  
reherceth this fable of an Ante /  
whiche came to a fontayne for  
to drynke / and as she wold haue  
dronke she felle within the fontayn / vpon the  
whiche was a columbe or douue / whiche seyng  
that the Ante shold haue ben drowned withoute  
helpe / took a brauncie of a tree / & cast it to  
her for to saue her self / ¶ And the Ante wente  
anone upon the brauncie and saued her / ¶ And  
anone after came a Fawkoner / whiche wold haue  
take the douue / And thenne the Ante whiche  
sawe that the Fawkoner dressyd his nettes came  
to his foote / and soo fast pryked hit / that she  
caused hym to smyte the erthe with his foote /  
and therwithe made soo gret noyse / that the douue  
herd hit / wherfore she flewhe aweye or the  
gynne and nettes were al sette / ¶ And therfore  
none ought to forgete the benyfyce whiche he  
hath receyued of some other / for flowfulnesse is  
a grete synne

**C** The xiij fable is of the Bee and of Jupiter



Ow the euyl which men wylle to  
other / cometh to hym whiche  
wylsheth hit / as hit appiereth by  
this fable / of a Bee whiche offred  
and gaf to Jupyter a pyce of hony /  
wherof Jupyter was moche Joyous / And thenne  
Jupyter sayd to the bee / demaunde of me what  
thow wylt / and I shalle graunte and gyue hit to  
the gladly / And thenne the Bee prayed hym in  
this manere / God almyghty I pray the that thow  
wylt gyue to me and graute / that who so ener  
shal come for to take awey my hony / yf I pryke  
hym / he may sodenly deye / And by cause that  
Jupyter loued the humayn lygnage he sayd to  
the Bee / Suffysse the / that who so euer shalle  
goo to take thy hony / yf thow pryke or flynge  
hym / Incontynent thow shalt deye / And thus  
her prayer was tourned to her grete dommage /  
For men ought not to demaunde of god / but suche  
thynges that ben good and honest

**C** The xiij fable is of a carpenter



N as moche as god is more propyce  
and benygne to the good and holy /  
muche more he punyfsheth the  
wycked and euylle / As we may  
see by this fable / Of a carpenter  
whiche cutte wode vpon a Ryuer for to make a  
temple to the goddes / And as he cutte wode /  
his axe felle in the Ryuer / wherfore he beganne  
to wepe and to calle helpe of the goddes / And  
the god Mercurye for pyte appiered before hym  
And demaunded of hym wherfore he wepte / and  
shewed to hym an axe of gold / and demaunded  
of hym yf hit was the axe whiche he had lost /  
& he sayd nay / And after the god shewed to hym  
another axe of syluer / And semblably said nay  
And by cause that Mercurius fawe that he was  
good and trewe / he drewe his axe oute of the  
water / and took hit to hym with moche good  
that he gaf to hym / And the carpenter told thy-  
story to his felawes / of the whiche one of them  
came in to the same place for to cutte woode as  
his felawe dyd before / & lete falle his axe within  
the water / and beganne / to wepe and to de-  
maund

maund the helpe and ayde of the goddes / And  
thenne Mercury appiered to fore hym / and shewed  
to hym an axe of gold / and demaunded of hym  
in suche manere / Is the same hit that thou hast  
lost / And he ansuerd to Mercury / ye fayre syre  
and myghty god the same is it / And Mercury  
seynge the malyce of the vylayne gaf to hym  
neyther the same ne none other / and lefte hym  
wepynge / For god whiche is good and Just re-  
warded the good and trewe in this world / or  
eche other after his deserte and punyssheth the  
eylle and Iniuste

**C** The xiiij fable is of a yonge theef and of his  
moder

**H**e whiche is not chaftyfed at the begynnyng  
is euyll and peruers at the ende / As hit appiereth by  
this fable of a yonge child whiche  
of his yongthe beganne to stèle /  
and to be a theef / And the theftys whiche he  
maad / he broughte to his moder / and the moder  
toke them gladly / & in no wyse shal chaftyf  
hym / And after that he had done many theftys /  
he was taken / and condempned to be hanged /  
And as men ledde hym to the Justyce / his moder  
folowed hym and wepte fore / And thenne the  
child prayed to the Justyce / that he myght faye  
one word to his moder / And as he approuched  
to her / made semblaunt to telle her somme  
wordes at her ere / & with his teeth he bote of  
her nose / wherof the Justyce blamed hym / And  
he ansuerd in this manere / My lordes ye haue  
no cause to blame me therfore / For my moder  
is

is cause of my deth For yf she had wel chastyfed  
me / I had not come to this shame and vergoyne /  
For who loueth wel / wel he chastyfeth / And  
therfore chastyse wel youre children / to thende /  
that ye falle not in to such a caas

**C** The xv fable is of the flee and of the man.



E that dothe euyl / how be hit  
that the euylle be not grete  
men ought not to leue hym  
vnpunyfshed / As it appereth  
by this fable / Of a man whiche  
took a flee whiche bote hym / to whome the  
man sayd in this manere / Fle why bytest thou  
me / and letest me not slepe / and the flee  
ansuerd It is my kynd to doo foo / wherfore  
I praye the that thou wylt not put me to  
dethe / And the man beganne to lawhe / &  
sayd to the flee / how be it / that thou mayst  
not hurte me sore / Neuertheless / to the behoueth  
not to prycke me / wherfore thou shalt  
deye / For men ought not to leue none euyll  
vnpunyfshed how be hit that hit be not grete.

C The xvi fable is of the husband and of his  
two wyues.



**N**o thyng is werse to the man than  
the woman / As it appereth by  
this fable / of a man of a meane  
age / whiche tooke two wyues /  
that is to wete an old / & one  
yong / whiche were both dwellyng in his hows /  
& by cause that the old desyred to haue his  
loue / she plucked the blak herys fro his hede  
and his berde / by cause he shold the more be lyke  
her / And the yonge woman at the other syde  
plucked

plucked and drewe oute alle the whyte herys /  
to the ende / that he shold feme the yonger /  
more gay and fayrer in her syghte / And thus  
the good man abode withoute ony here on his  
hede And therfore hit is grete folye to the  
auncyent to wedde them self ageyne / For to  
them is better to be vnwedded / than to be  
euer in trouble with an euyl wyf / for the  
tyme in whiche they shold reste them / they  
put it to Payne and to grete labour.

¶ The xvij fable is of the labourer and of his  
children.

**H**e that laboureth and werketh con-  
tinually maye not faylle to haue  
plente of goodes / as it appiereth  
by this present fable / Of a good  
man labourer / whiche all his lyf  
had laboured and wrought / and was ryche /  
and whan he shold deye / he sayd to his chil-  
dren / My children I muste now deye / and  
my tresour I haue lefte in my vyne / And  
after that the good man was dede / his children  
whiche supposed that his tresour had ben in the  
vyne / dyd nothyng al day but delued hit / &  
it bare more fruyte than dyd before / ¶ For  
who trauaylleth wel / he hath euer brede ynough  
for to ete / And he that werketh not dyeth for  
honger.

¶ Here syngynnen the fables of Esope  
¶ And after foloweth the  
fables of Augan

C The fyrist fable is of the old woman and of  
the wulf



En ought not by byleue on al maner  
spyrtes / As reherceth this fable  
of an old woman / which faid to  
her child bicause that it wept /  
certeynly if thou wepst ony more /  
I shal make the to be ete of the wulf / & the  
wulf heryng this old woman / abode stylly to fore  
the yate / & supposed to haue eten the old  
womans child / & by caufe that the wulf had soo  
longe taryed there that he was hongry / he re-  
turned and went ageyne in to the wood / And  
the shewulf demaunded of hym / why hast thou  
not brought to me some mete / And the wulf  
ansuerd / by cause / that the old woman hath be-  
gyled me / the whiche had promysed to me to  
gyue to me her child for to haue ete hym / And  
at the lafte I hadde hit not / And therfore men  
ought in no wyse to trust the woman / And he  
is wel a fole that setteth his hope and truste in a  
woman / And therfore truste them not / and thou  
shalt doo as the sage and wyfe

**C** The second fable is of the tortoise and of the  
other byrdes

**H**E that enhaunceth hym self more than he oughte to do To hym oughte not to come noo good / As hit appiereth by this present fable / Of a tortoise / whiche said to the byrdes / ysf ye lyft me vp wel hyghe fro the ground to the ayer I shalle shewe to yow grete plente of precius stones / And the Egle toke her and bare her so hyghe / that she myghte not see the erthe / And the Egle sayd to her shewe me now these precius stones that thou promyset to shewe to me / And by cause that the tortoise myght not see in the erthe / and that the Egle knewe wel that he was deceyued / thrested his clowes in to the tortoses bely / and kyllled hit / For he that wylle haue and gete worship and gloriye may not haue hit withoute grete laboure / Therfore hit is better and more sure / to kepe hym lowly than to enhaunce hym self on hyghe / and after to deye shamefully and myserably / **C** For men sayn comynly / who so mounteth hyher / than he shold / he falleth lower than he wold

**C** The thyrd fable is of the two Creuysses

**H**E whiche will teche and lerne some other / ought first to corryge & examyne hym self / as it appereth by this fable of a creuyffe / whiche wold haue chastyfed her owne daughter bicause that she wente not wel ryght / And sayd to her in this manere / My daughter / hit pleaseth me not that thou goost thus backward / For euylle myght wel therof come to the / And thenne the daughter sayd to her moder My moder I shalle go ryght and forward with a good will but ye must goo before for to shewe to me the waye / But the moder coude not other wyfe goo / than after her kynd / wherfore her daughter sayd unto her / My moder fyrist lerne your self for to goo ryght and forward / and thenne ye shalle teche me And therfore he that wylle teche other / ought to shewe good ensample / For grete shame is to the doctour whanne his owne couple or faulte accuseth hym

**C** The fourthe fable is of the asse / and of the  
skynne of the Lyon



**N**One ought not to gloryfye hym self  
of the goodes of other . as recyteth  
this fable of an asse whiche som-  
tyme fond the skynne of a lyon /  
the whiche he dyd & wered on  
hym / but he coude neuer hyde his eres ther-  
with / & when he was / as he supposed wel  
arayed with the sayd skynne / he ranne in to  
the forest / And whanne the wyld beeastes sawe  
hym come / they were so serdfull that they alle  
beganne

beganne to flee / For they wend / that it had be  
the lyon / And the mayster of the asse ferched and  
soughte his asse in euery place al aboute And  
as he had soughte longe / he thoughte that he  
wold go in to the forest for to see yf his asse  
were there / And as soone as he was entryd  
in to the forest / he mette with his asse arayed  
as before is sayd / but his mayster whiche had  
soughte hym longe sawe his erys / wherfore he  
knewe hym wel / and anone toke hym / and  
sayd in this manere / Ha a mayster asse / arte  
thow clothed with the skynne of the lyon / thow  
makest the bestes to be aferd / but yf they knewe  
the / as wel as I do / they shold haue no fere of  
the / but I ensure the / that wel I shalle bete the  
therfore / And thenne he toke fro hym the skynne  
of the lyon / and sayd to hym Lyon shalt thou be  
no more / but an asse shalt thou euer be / And  
his mayster tooke thenne a staf/ and smote hym/  
soo that euer after he remembryd hym wel of  
hit / And therfore he whiche auaunceth hym  
self of other mennes goodes is a very foole / For  
as men sayn comynly he is not wel arayed nor  
wel appoynted / whiche is clothed with others  
gowne / ne also it is not honeste to make large  
thonges of other mennes leder

**C** The v sable is of the frogge and of the Foxe



One ought to auaunce hym self to  
doo that whiche he he can not  
doo / As hit appiereth of a frogge /  
whiche somtyme yslued or came  
oute of a dyche / the whiche  
presumed to haue lept upon a hyghe mon-  
tayne / And whanne the was vpon the moun-  
tayne / she sayd to other beestes / I am a may-  
streis in medecyn / and canne gyue remedy to  
al manere of sekenes by myn arte / and subtylyte /  
and shalle rendre and bryng yow vp ageyne in  
good helthe / wheroft some byleued her / And  
thenne the Foxe whiche perceyued the folyshe  
byleue of the beestes / beganne to lawhe / and  
sayd to them / poure beestes / how may this  
fowle and venemous beest whiche is seke and  
pale of colour render and gyue to yow helthe /  
For the leche whiche wylle hele somme other /  
ought syrste to hele hym self / For many one  
counterfayteth the leche / whiche can not a  
word of the scyence of medecyne / from the  
whiche god preserue and kepe vs

**C** The vj fable is of the two dogges

**H**E that taketh within hym self wayne  
glorye of that thynge / by the  
whiche he shold humble hym self  
is a very fole / as hit appereth by  
this fable / of a fader of famylle /  
whiche had two dogges / of the whiche the one  
withouthe ony barkyng bote the folke / & the  
other dyd barke and bote not / And whan the  
fader of famyll perceyued the shrewdnes and  
malyce of the dogge that barkyd not he henge  
on his nek a belle / to the ende that men shold  
beware of hym / wherfore the dogge was ouer  
prowd and fyers / and beganne to dyspreyse alle  
the other dogges / of the whiche one of the moost  
auncyent sayd to hym in this manere / O fole  
beest / now perceyue I wel thy foly and grete  
wodenesse to suppose / that this belle is gyuen to  
the for thyn owne deserte and meryte / but cer-  
tainly hit is not so / For hit is taken to the for  
thy demerytes / and by cause of thy shrewdnesse /  
and grete treason / for to shewe / that thou arte  
fals and traytour / And therfore none oughte to  
be Joyeful and gladde of that thynge / wherof  
he

he oughte to be tryſt and ſorowful / as many foles  
done / whiche make Joye of theyr vyces and  
euyll dedes / for a moche fole were the theef  
whiche that men ledde for to be hanged / and  
that he had a cord of gold aboute his neck / yf  
he ſhould make Joye therof / how be hit that the  
corde were moche ryche and fayre

**C** The viij fable is of the camel and of Jupiter

Uery creature ought to be content  
of that / that god hath gyuen to  
hym withoute to take their hery-  
taunce of other / As reherceth this  
fable Of a camel whiche som-  
tyme complayned hym to Jupiter of that the  
other beestes mocqued hym / by cause that he  
was not of so grete beaute / as they were of /  
wherfore to Jupiter Instantly he prayd in suche  
maner as foloweth / Fayr syre and god / I re-  
quyreand praye that thou wylt gyue to me hornes /  
to thende that I maye be nomore mocqued /  
Jupiter then beganne to lawhe / and in stede of  
hornes / he took fro hym his erys / and sayd /  
thow hast more good than hit behoueth thee to  
haue / And by cause that thow demaundest that /  
whiche thow oughtest not to haue I haue take  
fro the that whiche of ryght and kynd thou  
ouȝtest to haue / For none ought not to defyre  
more than he ought to haue / to the ende that  
he lese not that whiche he hath /

**C** The eyght fable is of the two felawes



En ought not to hold felaufship with  
hym / whiche is acustommed to  
begyle other / As hit appiereth  
by thys Fable / Of two felawes  
whiche somtyme held felaufship  
to eche other for to goo bothe by montaynes and  
valeyres And for to make better theyr vyage / they  
were sworne eche one to the other / that none  
of them bothe should leue other vnto that the  
tyme of dethe shold come and departe them /  
And as they walked in a forest they mette with  
a grete wyld bere / & bothe felaws ran fone awey  
for fere / of the whiche the one clymmed / vpon  
a tree / And whan the other fawe that his felawe  
had lefste hym leyd hym self on the erthe / and  
fayned to be dede / And Incontynent the bere  
came for to ete hym / but by cause the gallaunt  
playd wel his game / the bere went forthe his  
waye and touched hym not / And thēne his felawe  
came doun fro the tree whiche sayd to hym / I  
pray thee to telle me what the bere sayd to the /  
For as me semeth he spake to the / and hath  
shewed

shewed to the grete sygne or token of loue / And  
thenne his felawe fayd to hym / He taught me  
many fayre secrete / but emonge alle other  
thynges he fayd to me / that I shold neuer trust  
hym who ones hath deceyued me

C The ix fable maketh mencion of the two pottes



He poure ought not to take the Ryche as his felawe as it appiereth by this fable of two pottes / of the whiche the one was coper / and the other of erthe / the whiche pottes dyd mete to gyder within a Ryuer / C & by cause that the erthen pot wente swyfster than dyd the coper potte / the pot of coper sayd to the pot of erthe / I praye the that we may goo to gyder / And the erthen potte ansuerd and sayd to the coper pot / I wylle not go with the / For it shold happe to me as it happed to the glas and of the morter For yf thou sholdest mete with me / thou sholdest breke and putte me in to pyeces / C And therfore the poure is a sole that compareth and lykeneth hym self to the ryche and myghty / For better is to lyue in pouerte than to deye vylaynously and opprestlyd of the ryche

**C** The x fable is of the lyon and of the boole

IT is not alweye tyme to auenge hym  
self of his enemye / As it appiereth  
by this fable of a bole / whiche  
fomtyme fledde before a lyon /  
And as the bole wold entre with-  
in a cauerne for to saue hym / a gote wente  
geynste hym for to kepe and lette hym that  
he shold not entre in it / to whome the bole  
sayd / It is not tyme now to auenge me on the /  
for the lyon that chafeth me / but the tyme shalle  
come that wel I shalle fynde the / For men  
ought not to doo to hym self dommage for to  
be auengyd of his enemy / but oughte to loke  
for tyme and place couenable for to doo hit

**C** The xi fable is of the Ape and of his sone

No fowler a thyng is to the man / than  
with his mouth to preyse hym self /  
As this fable reherceth to vs / Of  
Jupiter kynge of alle the world  
whiche made alle the beeftes and  
alle the byrdes to be assembled to gyder for  
to knowe theyr bounte / and also theyr kynd /  
Emonge alle the whiche came the Ape / whiche  
presented his sone to Jupiter / sayenge thus /  
Fayre syre and myghty god / loke and see here  
the fairest beast that euer thou createst in this  
world / And Jupiter thenne beganne to lawhe /  
and after sayd to hym / thou arte wel a fowle  
beast to preyse soo thy self / For none oughte  
to preyse hym self / but oughte to doo good  
and vertuous werkes / wherof other may preyse  
hym / for it is a shameful thyng to preyse hym  
self

**C** The xij fable is of the crane and of the pecock



Or what vertue that ony man hath /  
none oughte to preyse hym self /  
As hit apiereth by this fable / Of  
a pecok / whiche somtyme made  
a dyner to a crane / And And  
whanne they had eten and dronken ynough /  
they had grete wordes to gyder / wherfore the  
pecok sayd to the crane / Thow hast not so fayre  
a forme ne so fayre a fygure as I haue / ne also  
fayr fethers / ne foo resplendyslyng as I haue /  
To whome the crane ansuerd / and sayd / It is  
trouthe / Neuertheles thow hast not one good / ne  
one so fayre a vertue as I haue / For how be hit  
that I haue no so fayre fethers as thou hast /  
yet can I flee better than thy self doft / For  
with thy fayre fethers thou must euer abyde  
on the erthe / and I may flee where someuer  
hit pleafeth me / And thus euerychone ought to  
haue suffysaunce and to be content of that / that  
he hath / without auanncynge or prayfynge of  
hym self / and not to dyspreye none other.

¶ The xiij fable is of the hunter and of the tygre



Erse is the stroke of a tonge / than  
the stroke of a spere as hit ap-  
piereth by this fable / Of a hunter /  
whiche with his arowes hurted the  
wyld beestes / in suche wyse that  
none escaped fro hym / to the whiche beestes a  
tygre fyers and hard sayd in this manere / Be  
not aferd / For I shalle kepe yow well / And as  
the Tygre came in to the wode / the hunter was  
hyd within a bushe / the whiche whan he sawe  
passē the tygre before the bushe / he shote at hym  
an arowe / and hytte hym on the thye / wher-  
fore the tygre was gretely abashed / And wepynge  
and sore syghynge sayd to the other beestes / I  
wote not from whens this cometh to me / ¶ And  
whanne the foxe sawe hym so gretely abashed /  
al lawhyng sayd to hym / Ha a tygre / thou arte  
so myghty and so stronge / And thenne the tygre  
sayd to hym / My strengthe auaylled me not at  
that tyme / For none may kepe hym self fro  
treason / And therfore some secrete is here / whiche  
I knewe not before / But notwithstandingynge this I  
maye wel conceyue / that there is no wors arowe /

ne

ne that letteth more the man / than tharowe  
whiche is shott fro the euyll tongue/ For whanne  
som persone profereth or sayth som wordes in a  
felaufship / of sommen a of honest & good lyf/  
alle the felaufship supposeth that that whiche this  
euylle tongue hath sayd be trewe / be hit trewe  
or not / how be it that it be but lesynge / but  
notwithftondyne the good man shalle euer be  
wounded of that fame arowe / whiche wound  
shalle be Incurable / And yf hit were a stroke of  
a spere / hit myght be by the Cyrurgyen heled /  
but the stroke of an euylle tongue may not be  
heled / by caufe that Incontynent as the word is  
profered or sayd / he that hath sayd hit / is no  
more mayster of hit / And for this caufe the stroke  
of a tongue is Incurable and withoute guarayfon

**C** The xiiij fable is of the four oxen



En oughte not to breke his feythe  
ageynste his good Frend / ne to  
leue his felawhip / as hit appiereth  
by this fable / of four oxen whiche  
to gyder were in a fair medowe /

**C** And by cause that euer they were and kepte  
them to gyder / none other beef durst not assaylle  
them / and also the lyon dradde them moche /  
the whiche lyon on a daye came to them / And  
by his deceyuuable wordes thoughte for to begyle  
them / & to raushe & take them the better /  
maade them to be separed eche one fro other /

**C** And whanne they were sepered / the lyon  
wente / and toke one of them / And whan the  
lyon wold haue strangled hym / the oxe sayd to  
hym / godsep / He is a foole whiche byleueth  
fals and deceyuuable wordes And leueth the felaw-  
ship of his good frende / For yf we had ben euer  
to gyder / thow haddest not taken me / And  
therfore he whiche is / and standeth wel sure /  
ought to kepe hym sooth that he falle not / For  
to whiche is wel / meue not hym self

¶ The xv fable is of the bushe / and of the  
aubyer tree



One for his beaute ought not to  
despreyse some other / For som-  
tyme suche one is fayre that  
soone wexeth lothely and fowle /  
and to hyghe falleth vnto lowe /  
as it apperyth by this fable / Of a fayr tree  
whiche mocqued and scorned a lytyl bushe /  
and sayd / ¶ Seest thou not / my fayre fourme  
and my fayre fygure / And that of me men  
and byldeth fayre edefyces as palays and castellis /  
galeyes & other shippes for to saylle on the see /  
And as he auaunced & preyfed hym self thus /  
came there a labourer with his axe for to hewe  
and smyte hym to the ground / And as the  
labourer smote vpon the fayre tree / the bushe  
sayd / Certaynly my broder yf now thou were  
as lytel / as I am / men shold not hewe ne smyte  
the doune to the erthe / And therfore none  
oughte to reioyshe hym self of his worship /  
For suche is now in grete honour and worship /  
that herafter shalle falle in to grete vytupere  
shame and dishonour

**C** The xvij fable is of the syther / and of the  
lytyl sythe



En ought not to leue that thyng  
whiche is sure & certayne / for  
hope to haue the vncertayn / as  
to vs reherceth this fable of a  
fysher whiche with his lyne toke  
a lytyll fyfhe whiche sayd to hym / My frend I  
pray the / doo to me none euylle / ne putte  
me not to deth / For now I am nougth / for  
to be eten / but whanne I shalle be grete / yf  
thow come ageyne hyther / of me shalt thou  
mowe haue grete auaylle / For thenne I shalle  
goo with the good whyle / And the Fysher  
sayd to the fyfhe . Syn I hold the now / thou  
shalt not scape fro me / For grete foly hit were  
to me for to seke the here another tyme / For  
men ought not to lete goo that / of what they  
be sure of / hopynge to haue afterwards that  
that they haue not and whiche is vncertayne.

¶ The xvij fable is of phebus / of the Auarycious /  
and of the enuyous



One oughte to doo harme or dom-  
age to somme other for to re-  
ceyue or doo his owne dommage /  
As hit appereth by this fable / Of  
Jupiter whiche sent phebus in to  
therthe for to haue al the knowlege of the  
thouȝt of men ¶ This phebus thenne mette  
with two men / of whiche the one was moche  
enuyous / And the other ryght couetous / Phebus  
demaunded of them what theyr thought was /  
We thynke said they to demaunde and aske of  
the grete yeftes / To the which phebus ansuerd /  
Now demaunde that ye wylle / For all that that  
ye shalle demaunde of me / I shalle graunte hit /  
And of that / that the fyrst of yow shalle aske /  
the second haue the dowble parte / or as moche  
more ageyne / And thenne the auarycious sayd /  
I wyl that my felawe aske what he wyll fyrst  
wherof the enuyous was wel content / whiche  
sayd to Phebus Fayre syre I praye the that I  
maye lese one of myn eyen / to thende that  
my felawe may lese al bothe his eyen / wherfor  
phebus

phebus beganne to lawhe whiche departed and  
wente ageyne vnto Jupiter / and told hym the  
grete malyce of the enuyous / whiche was Joye-  
ful and glad of the harme and dommage of an  
other / & how he was wel content to suffre  
payne for to haue adommaged somme other

C The xvij fable is of the theef / and of the  
child wiche wepte

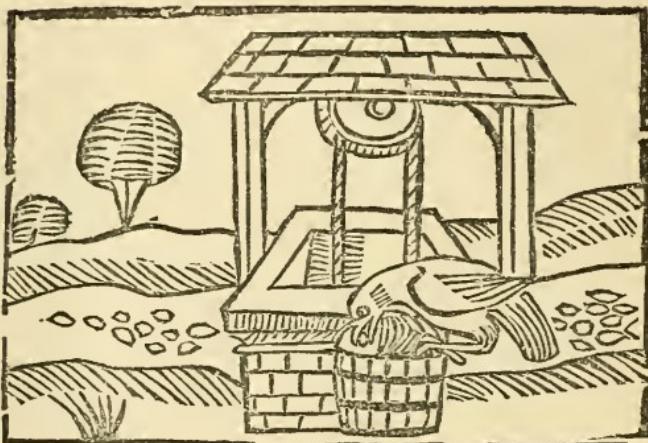
**H**E is a fole that putteth his good in jeopardy to lese it for to gete & haue som others good / as it appereth by this fable of a theef whiche fond a child wepyng before a welle / of whom the theef dyde aske why he wepte / & the child answerd to hym I wepe / by cause that I haue lete falle within this welle a loket of gold / & thenne the theef toke of his clothes / & sette them on the ground and wente doun in to the welle / And as he was doun the child toke his gowne & lefte hym within the welle / And thus for couetyse to wynne / he lost his gowne / For suche supposen to wynne somtyme whiche lesen / And therfore none ought to wyshe that / that he hath not / to thende that he leseth not that / that he hath / For of the thyng wrongfully and euylle gotten / the thyrd heyre shalle neuer be pffesour of hit.

**C** The xix fable is of the lyon and of the gote

**H**e is wyse that can kepe hym self  
from the wylly and fals / as hit  
appereþ by this fable / Of a lyon /  
whiche ones mette with a gote /  
whiche was vpon a montayne

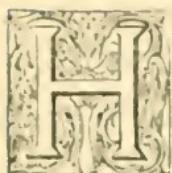
And whanne the lyon sawe her / he sayd to her  
in this manere / For to gyue to her occacion to  
come doun fro the hylle / to thende that he  
myght ete her / My fuster why comest thou not  
hyder on this fayre and grene medowe for to ete  
of these fayre herbes or graſſe / And the gote  
ansuerd to hym / How be hit / that thou sayſt  
trouthe / Neuertheles thou sayſt it not / neyther  
for my wele ne for my prouffyte / but thou sayſt  
hit / by cause that thou woldest fayne ete and  
deuoure me / but I trusste not in thy fayre speche /  
For many tymes I haue herd saye of my graūt  
moder / he that is wel / meue not hym self / For  
he whiche is in a place wel sure / is wel a sole to  
go fro hit / and to putte hym self in grete daunger  
and perylle

**C** The xx fable was of the crowe whiche was a  
thurst



**B**etter is crafte and subtylyte than  
force / As reherceth to vs this  
fable / Of a crowe whiche vpon  
a day came for to drynke oute  
of a boket / and by cause that she  
myght not reche to the water / she dyd fyll the  
boket ful of smal stones / in soo moche that the  
water came vpward / wherof she dranke thenne  
at her wylle / and playfyre / And therfore hit  
appiereth wel / that wytte or sapyence is a moche  
fayr vertue For by sapyence or wytte / thou shalt  
mowe resyfte to all faultes /

**C** The xxij fable is of the vylayne and of the  
yonge bole /



E whiche is of euylle and shrewd  
kynd / with grete payne he may  
chasty h ym self / as it appereth by  
this fable / Of a vylayne / whiche  
had a yonge bole / the whiche he  
myght not bynd / by cause that euer he smote  
with his hornes / wherfore the vylayne cutte of  
his hornes / **C** But yet whan he wold haue bound  
hym / the bole casted his fute fro hym / in suche  
wyse that he suffred noman to come nyghe hym /  
And whan the vylayne perceyued the malyce of  
the bole / he sayd to hym / I shalle chastyse the  
wel / For I shalle take the in to the bouchers  
handes / And thenne was the bole wel chastyfed /  
**C** And thus ought men to doo of the euylle /  
curlyd & rebelles / whiche doo no thynge but  
playe with dees and cardes and to ruffule / Such  
folke ought men to put in to the handes of the  
boucher for to lede them to the galhows / For  
better may no man chastyse them / For with  
grete payne may he be chastyfed / whiche sleeth  
alle good werkes ond alle good felauship

¶ The xxij fable is of the viator or palmer and  
of Satyre



En ought to beware & kepe hym  
self from hym whiche bereth both  
fyre and water / as reherceth to vs  
this Fable Of a pylgrym / whiche  
somtyme walked in the wynter /  
and wente thurgh a grete forest / ¶ And by  
cause that the snowe had couerd al the wayes /  
he wist ne knewe not whyther he wente /  
ageynste the whiche came a wodewose named  
Satyre by cause he sawe hym a cold / whiche  
aproched to the pylgrym and brought hym in  
to his pytte / And whan the pylgrym sawe  
hym / he hadde grete drede by cause that a  
wodewose is a monstre lyke to the man / as hit  
appiereth by his fygure / ¶ And as the wode-  
wose or Satyre ledde the pylgrym in to his  
pytte / the pylgrym dyd blowe within his handes  
for to chauffe them / For he was sore cold /  
And thenne the wodewose gaf to hym hote water  
to drynke / ¶ And whan the pylgrym wold  
haue dronken hit / he beganne to blowe in hit /  
And the wodewose demaunded of hym / why  
he

he dyd blowe in hit / And the pylgrym sayd to  
hym / I blowe in hit / for to haue it somwhat  
more cold than hit is / The wodewose thenne  
sayd to hym / Thy felauhip is not good to me /  
by cause that thou bereft bothe the fyre and the  
water in thy mouthe / therfore go hens fro my  
pyt and neuer retorne ageyne / For the felauhip  
of the man whiche hath two tongues is nouȝt /  
And the man wiche is wyse ought to flee the  
felauhip of flaterers / For by flateryng & adu-  
lacion many haue ben begyled and deceyued

**C** The xxijij fable is of the oxe and of the rat

He lordes ought to loue theyr subgettis / For he whiche is hated of his tenaunts and subgets / is not lord of his land / as hit appereth by this Fable / Of an oxe / whiche sointyme was within a stable / and as the oxe on a tyme wold haue slepte fayne / a rat came / whiche bote the oxe by the thyres / And as the oxe wold haue smyten hym / he ran awaye into his hole / And thenne the oxe beganne to menace the rat / And the ratte sayd to hym / I am not aferd of the / And yf thou arte grete / thy parentes ben cause therof and not thy self / And therfore the stronge ought not to despeyse the feble / but ought to loue hym as the chyef or hede ought to loue his lymmes / For he that loueth not / oughte not to be loued / And therfore the lord must loue his subgettys / yf of them he wylle be loued

C The xxvij fable is of the goos and of her lord

**H**E that ouer ladeth hym self / is  
euylle strayned / As this fable  
sayeth / of a man / whiche had  
a goos / that leyd euery day an  
egge of gold / The man of  
auaryce or couetousnes commaunded and bad  
to her / that euery daye she shold leye two  
egges / And she sayd to hym / Certaynly / my  
mayster I maye not / wherfore the man was  
wrothe with her / and slewe her / wherfore he  
lost that same grete good / of the whiche dede  
he was moche forowful and wrothe / how be  
it that it was not tyme to shette the stable  
whan the horses ben loste / & gone / And he  
is not wyse whiche does such a thynge / wherof  
he shalle repente hym after ward / ne healso /  
whiche doth his owne dommage for to auenge  
hym self on somme other / For by cause that  
he supposeth to wynne al / he leseth all that  
he hath.

**C** The xxv fable is of the ape and of his two  
children



E that somtyme men despreyfē /  
may wel helpe somme other / as  
hit appereth by this Fable of an  
Ape / whiche had two children /  
of the whiche he hated the one /  
& loued the other / whiche he toke in his armes /  
and with hym fled before the dogges / And  
whanne the other sawe / that his moder lefte  
hym behynde / he ranne and leptē on her back /  
And by cause that the lytyl ape whiche the she  
ape held in her armes empeched her to flee /  
she lete hit falle to the erthe / And the other  
whiche the moder hated held fast and was  
faued / the whiche from thens forthon kyssed  
and embraced his moder / And And the thenne  
beganne to loue hym wherfore many tymes  
it happeth / that that thyngē whiche is  
despreyfed / is better than that thyngē whiche is  
loued and preyfed / For somtyme the children  
whiche ben preyfed and loued / done lasse good  
than they whiche ben despreyfed and hated

C The xxviij fable is of the wynd and of  
therthen pot

**H**e that ouer moche enhaunceth hym self/ sooner than he wold/ he falleth doun / as hit appereth by this fable/ Of an erthen pot maker whiche made a grete pot of erthe/ the whiche he dyd sette in the sonne/ by cause that more surely hit shold haue ben dryed / Ageynste the whiche came and blewe a grete wynd / And whanne the wynd sawe the potte he demaunded of hym / who arte thou / And the pot ansuerd to hym / I am a potte the best made that men can fynde / & none may lette ne empeche me / And how sayd the wynde / thou art yet al loste / and hast neyther vertue ne none force / and by cause I knowe wel thy ouer pryd / I shall breke the / and putte the in to pyees / to thende / that thou of thy grete pryd mayst haue knowlege / And therfore the feble ought to meke and humble hym self and obeye to his lord / and not to enhance hym more than he ought / to thende / he falleth not from hyhe to lowe

**C** The xxvij fable is of the wulf and of the lambe



f two euyls men ought euer to  
eschewe and flee the worst of  
bothe / yf ony of them may be  
eschewed / as hit appiereth by  
this fable / of a wulf / whiche  
ranne after a lambe / the whiche lambe fled  
into the hows where as gotes were / And whan  
the wulf sawe that he myght in no wyse take  
the lambe / he sayd to hym by swete wordes /  
Leue thy felauiship / and come with me into the  
feldes / for yf thou come not / thou shalt be  
take by them / and shalt be sacryfyed to theyre  
goddes / And the lamb ansuered to the wulf /  
I haue leuer to shede al my blood for the loue  
of the goddes / and to be sacryfyed / than to be  
eten and deuoured of the / And therfore he is  
ful of wysedome and of prudence / who of two  
grete euyls may and can escape the grettest of  
bothe /

**C** Here synysshen the fables of Auian / And  
after followen the fables of Alfonce

¶ The syrſt fable maketh mencion of therhortacion of sapience or wylsdome and of loue



Rabe of Lucanye sayd to his sone in  
this maner / My sone beware &  
loke that the formyee be not  
more prudent or wyſer / than  
thy ſelf / the whiche gadreth &  
aſſembleth to gyder in the ſomer all that to  
her nedeth to haue in the wynter / and beware  
that thou ſlepe no lenger / than the Cocke  
doth the whiche watcheth and waketh atte matyns  
tyme / and that he be not wyſer and more ſage  
than thy ſelf / the whiche rewleth and gouerneth  
wel ix hennes / but hit ſuffyseth wel / that thou  
rewle and gouerne one wel / And alſo that the  
dogge be not more noble than thy ſelf / the  
whiche forgeteth neuer the good whiche is done  
to hym / but euer he remembryth it / ¶ Item my  
ſone ſuppoſe it not a lytyll thynge to haue a good  
Frend but doubtē not to haue a thouſand frendes /  
¶ And whanne A rabe wold deye / he demaunded  
of his ſone / My ſone how many good frendes  
haſt thou / And his ſone anſwered to hym / My  
fader I haue as I ſuppoſe an honderd frendes /  
And

And the fader ansuerd to hym / beware and loke  
wel that thou suppose none to be thy frendes  
withouthe that thou haft assayed & proued hym /  
For I haue lyued lenger than thy self haste /  
& vnnethe I haue gete half a frend / wherfore  
I meruaylle moche how thou haft geten so  
many frendes / And thenne the sone seynge the  
admyracion or wonder of his fader / demaunded  
of hym / My fader . I praye yow that ye wylle  
gyue to me counceil how I shalle mowe preue  
and essaye my frend / And his fader sayd to hym  
/ goo thou and kylle a calf / and putte it in a sakk  
al blody / and bere hit to thy fyrst frend / and  
faye to hym that hit is a man whiche thou haft  
flayne / And that for the loue of whiche he  
loueth the / that he wylle kepe thy mysdede  
secretely and burye hit / to thende that he may  
faue the / the which cunceytle his sone dyd / to  
whome his frend sayd / retorne ageyne to thy  
hows / For yf thou haft done euylle / I wylle  
not bere the Payne for the / For within my hows  
thow shalt not entre / And thus one after other  
he assayed alle his frendes / and euery of them  
made to hym suche an ansuere as the fyrst dyd /  
wheroft gretely he was abafshed / And thenne  
he retorne agayn to his fader / and told hym /  
how he had done / And his fader ansuerd to  
hym / Many one ben frendes of wordes only /  
but

but fewe ben in sayth or dede / but I shalle telle  
to the what thou shalt doo / Goo thou to my  
half frende / and bere to hym thy calf / and  
thow shalt here and see what he shalle saye to  
the / And whanne the sone came to the half  
frende of his fader / he sayd to hym as he dyd  
to the other / And whanne the half frende vnder-  
stode his fayt or dede / he anone toke hym  
secrectely in to his hows / and ledde hym in to  
a sure and obscure place / where he dyd burye  
his dede calf / wherof the sone knewe the trouthe  
of the half frendes loue / Thenne the sone of  
Arabe torned ageyne toward his fader / and told  
to hym all that his half frende had done to  
hym / And thenne the fader sayd to his sone /  
that the philosopher saith that the very and  
trewe frend is fond in the xtreme nede / Thenne  
asked the sone of his fader / sawest thou neuer  
man whiche in his lyf gate a hole frend / &  
his fader said to hym / I sawe neuer none / but  
wel haue I herd it say / And the sone ansuered /  
My fader I praye the that thow wylt reherce hit  
to me / to thende / that by aduenture I maye  
gete suche one / And the fader sayd to hym /  
My sone / som tyme haue I herd of two mar-  
chaunts whiche neuer had sene eche other / the  
one was of Egypte / and the other was of Baldak  
but they had knowleche eche of other by theyr  
lettres /

lettres / whiche they fente and wrote frendly one  
to the other / hit befelle thenne that the mer-  
chaunt of Baldak came in to egypte for to chepe  
& bye somme ware or marchaundyse / wheroft  
his frend was moche gladde / and wente to mete  
hym and brought him benyngly in to his hows /  
And after that he had chered and festyed hym  
by the space of xiiij dayes / the same marchaunt  
of baldak wexed and became seke / wheroft his  
frend was sorowfull and ful heuy / and Incon-  
tynent fente for phisycyens or leches thurugh  
alle egypte for to recouere his helthe / And whan  
the medecyns had sene and vyfyted hym / and  
his vryne also / they sayd that he had no bodily  
sekeness/ but that he was rauyfshed by loue/ And  
whan his Frend herd these wordes / he came  
to hym / and sayd / My frende I pray the / that thou  
wilt shewe and telle to me thy sekenes /  
And his frend said to hym I praye the / that thou  
wylt make to come hyder alle the wymmen  
and maydens whiche ben in thy hows / for to  
see / yf she whiche my herte desyreth is emonge  
them / And anone his Frend made to come be-  
fore hym bothe his owne doughters & seruants  
Emonge the whiche was a yonge mayde / whiche  
he had nouryfshed for his playfyre / And whan  
the pacyent or seke man sawe her / he sayd to  
his frend / the same is she whiche maye be cause  
of

of my lyf or my deth / the whiche his frend gaf  
to hym for to be his wyf with alle suche goodes  
as he had of her / the whiche he wedded / and  
retorned with her in to baldak with grete Joye /  
but within a whyle after it happed and fortuned  
so that this marchaunt of egypte fylle in pouerte /  
and for to haue somme consolacion and confort  
he tooke his way toward baldak / and supposed  
to goo and see his frend / And aboute one euen  
he arryued to the Cyte / And for as moche that  
he was not well arayed ne clothed / he had  
shame by daye lyȝt to go in to the hows of his  
Frend / but wente and lodged hym withynne a  
Temple nyghe to a Frendes hows

¶ It happed thenne that on that same nyght  
that he laye there a man slew another man  
before the yate or entre of the sayd Temple /  
wherfore the neyghbonrs were sore troubled /  
And thenne all the peple moeued therof came  
in to the Temple / wherin they fond no body  
sauf only thegypcyen / the whiche they toke /  
and lyke a murderer Interrogated hym why he  
had tlayne that man whiche lay dede before the  
portall or gate of the temple / He thenne seyng  
his Infortune and pouerte / confessed / that he  
had kylled hym / For by cause of his euyll fortune  
he wold rather deye than lyue ony more / wher-  
fore he was had before the Juge / and was con-  
demned

dempned to be hanged / And whan men ledde  
hym toward the galhows / his frend sawe and  
knewe hym / and beganne to wepe fore/ remem-  
bryng the bienfayttes whiche he had done to  
hym / wherfore he went to the Justyce and sayd /  
My lordes this man dyd not the homycyde / For  
hit was my self that dyd hit / And therfore ye  
shold dogrete synne yf ye dyd put this Innocent and  
gyltles to dethe / And anone he was take for be  
had vnto the galhows / And thenne the Egypcyen  
sayd / My lordes / he dyd hit not / And therfore  
euylle shold ye doo to put him to dethe / And as  
the two frendes wold haue been hanged eche  
one for other / he whiche had done the homycyde  
came and knewe and confessyd there his synne /  
and adressed hym self before the Justyce and  
sayd / My lordes / none of them bothe hath done  
the dede / And therfore punyshe not ye these  
Innocents / For I allone ought to bere the payne/  
whereof all the Justyse was gretely meruaylled /  
And for the doubte whiche therin was grete / the  
Justyce toke them al thre / & ledde them before  
the kynge And when they had reherced to the  
kynge all the maner / after enquest theupon  
made / and he knewe the very trouthe of hit /  
graunted his grace to the murderer / and so alle  
thre were delyuerd / And the frend brought his  
frend in to hys hows / and receyued hym Joyously /  
and

and after he gaf to hym bothe gold and syluer /  
And the egypcyen torned ageyne in to his hows /  
And whan the fader had sayd and reherced all  
this to his sone / his sone sayd to hym / My fader  
I knowe now wel that he whiche may gete a  
good frende is wel happy / And with grete labour  
as I suppose I shal gete suche one.

**C** The second fable is of the commyss̄on of pecuny  
or money



Spaynard arryued somtyme in to the lande of egipte and by cause that he doubted to be robbed within the desertys of Arabe / he purposed and bethought in hym self that it were wysely done to take his money to somme trewe man for to kepe hit vnto his retorne ageyne / And by cause that he herd somme saye / that within the Cyte was a trewe man / he anone wente to hym / and toke to hym his syluer / for to kepe hit / And whan he had done his vyage he came ageyne to hym / and demaunded of hym his syluer / whiche ansuerd to hym in this manere / My frend / I ne wote who thou arte / for I sawe the neuer that I wote of / And yf thou fayest or spekest ony more wordes / I shalle make the to be wel bete / Thenne was the spaynard forowful and wroth / and therof he wold haue made a playnte to his neyghbours / as he dyde / & the neyghbours sayd to hym / Certaynly / we be wel abashed of that / that ye telle to vs / for he is emonge vs alle reputed and

and holden for a good man and trewe / And therfore retorne ageyne to hym / and by swete wordes telle hym that he wyl rendre to the thy good ageyne / the whiche thynge he dyd / and the old man ansuerd to hym more sharply and wonderly than he had done before / wheroft the spaynard was wonderly wrothe / And as he departed oute of the old mans hows / he mette with an old woman / the whiche demaunded of hym / wherfore he was soo troubled and heuy / And after that he had told to her the cause why / thold woman sayd to hym / make good chere / For yf hit is so as thou sayst / I shalle cunceylle the how thou shalt recouere thy syluer / And thenne he demaünded of her / how hit myght be done / And she sayd to hym bryng hyther to me a man of thy country whome thou trustest / and doo to be madē four fayre chestes / and fylle them alle with stones / and by thy selawes thou shalt make them to be borne / in to his hows / and to hym they shalle say / that the marchaūts of spayne send them to hym for to kepe surely / And whan the chestes shalle be within his hows / thou shalt go and demāde of hym thy syluer / whiche thynge he dyd / And as the sayd chestes were borne within his hows / the spaynard wente with them / that bare them / the whiche straungers sayd to the old mā My lord / these

four

four chefes ben al ful of gold / of syluer and of  
precious stones / whiche we brynge to yow / as to  
the trewest man and feythal that we knowe for  
to kepe them surely by cause that we fere and  
doubte the theues / whiche ben within the desert /  
After the whiche wordes fayd / came he / whiche  
the old woman had cunceyld / and demaunded  
of hym his syluer And by that cause the old man  
doubted / that the spaynard wold haue def-  
preyfed hym / he fayd thus to hym / Thow arte  
Welcome / I merueyld how thow taryest so  
longe for to come / And Incontynent he restored  
to hym his syluer / And thus by the cunceytle  
of the woman whiche he gretely thanked / he  
had his good ageyn / and retourned ageyne in to  
his countrey /

**C** The thyrd fable speketh of a subtyle Enuencion of a sentence gyuen upon a derke and obscure cause.

**H**It befelle somtyme that a good man labourer wente fro lyf to deth / the whiche labourer lefte nothyng to his sone / but only a hows / the whiche sone lyued by the laboure of his handes pourely / This yong man had a neyghbour whiche was made ryche whiche demaūded of the sayd yong man yf he wold selle his hows / but he wold not selle it / by caufe that it was come to hym by inherytaūce and by patrymony wherfore the ryche man his neygbour conuersyd & was ful oft with hym for to deceyue hym / but the yong man fled his company as moche as he myght / & whan the ryche man perceyued that the yong man fled from hym / he bethougt hym self of a grete depcion & falshede / & demaūded of the poure yong man that he wold hyre to hym a parte of his hows for to delue & make a celer / the whiche he shold hold of hym payeng to hym yerely rent / & the poure yong man hyred it to hym / & whan the

the celer was made / the ryche man did do bryng  
therin x tones of oylle of the which the v were  
ful of of oylle / & the the other v were but half  
full / & dyd do make a grete pytte in the erthe /  
& dyd do put the fyue tonnes whiche were half  
ful in hit / & the other fyue aboue them / And  
thenne he shytte the dore of the celer / and de-  
lyuerd the keye to the poure yonge man / and  
prayd hym frawdelently to kepe wel his oylle /  
but the poure yonge man knewe not the malyce  
and falshede of his neyghboure / wherfore he  
was contente to kepe the keye / And within a  
whyle after as the oylle became dere / the ryche  
came to the poure / and asked hym his good / and  
the yong man toke to hym the keye / this Ryche  
man thenne fold his oylle to the marchaunts /  
and waraunted eche tonne al ful / And when the  
marchaunts mesured theyr oylle / they fond but  
fyue of the x tonnes full / wheroft the ryche man  
demaunded of the poure yonge man restitu-  
cion / and for to haue his hows he maade hym to  
come before the Juge / ¶ And whanne the poure  
man was before the Juge / he demaunded terme  
and space for to answere / For hym thought and  
femed that he had kepte well his oylle / and the  
Juge gaf and graūted to hym day of aduys / &  
thēne he went to a philosophre which was pro-  
curatour of the poure peple / & prayd hym for  
charyte /

charyte/ that he wold gyue to hym good coucaylle  
of his grete nede / & he reherced and told to hym  
al his cause & swore vpon the holy euangely that  
he toke none of the ryche mans oylle / And  
thenne the philosopher ansuerd to hym in this  
manere / My sone / haue no fere / for the trouthe  
may not faylle / And the next morowe after / the  
philosopher wente with the poure man in to  
Jugement / the whiche philosopher was confi-  
tued by the kynge for to gyue the Just sentence  
of hit / And after that the cause had be wel  
desynded and pleted by bothe partyes / the  
philosophre sayd / the famie ryche man is of good  
renomme / and I suppose not that he demaunded  
more than he shoulde haue / And also I byleue  
not that this poure may be maculed ne gylty of  
the blame / which he putteth on hym / but not-  
withstondyng for to knowe the trouthe of hit / I  
ordeyne and gyue sentence / that the oylle pure  
and clene of the v tonnes whiche are ful to be  
mesured / and also the lye therof / And after that  
the pure and clene oylle of the fyue which been  
but half ful to be also measured / and with the lye  
thereof / and that men loke yf the lye of the fyue  
Tonnes half ful is egal and lyke to the lye of the  
fyue Tonnes / whiche ben fulle / And yf hit be  
not soo / that as moche lye be fond within the  
veffels whiche ben but half full as in the other /

he

he shalle thenne be suffysauntly & ryghteoyfly  
proued / that none oyle hath be taken oute of  
them / but yf ther be fond as moche lye in the  
one as in the other / the poure shall be con-  
demned / and of this sentence the poure was  
contente / & the trouthe was knownen / wherfore  
the poure man went quyte / and the ryche was  
condempned / For his grete malyce and falsheed  
was knownen and manyfested / For there is no  
synne or mysdede done / but that ones it shalle be  
knownen and manyfested.

C The fourthe fable maketh mention of the sentence gyuen vp the pecuny or money whiche was found.



Ryche man somtyme wente by a Cyte / And as he walked fro one syde to that other / fylle fro hym a grete purse / wherin were a thousand Crownes / the whiche a poure man fond / and toke them for to kepe to his wyf / wherof she was ful gladde / and sayd / thanked be god of al the goodes whiche he sendeth to vs / yf he sendeth now this grete somme kepe we hit wel / And on the next morne after folowyng / the Ryche man made to be cryed thurgh the cyte / that who someuer had fond a thowsand Crownes in a purse / he shold restitue / and brynge them to hym ageyne / and that he shold haue for his reward an hondred of them / And after that the poure man had herd this crye / he ranne Incontynent to his wyf / & sayd to her / My wyf / that / that we haue fond must be rendred or yolden ageyne / For hit is better to haue a C crownes withoute synne than a thowsand with synne & wrongfully / And how  
be

be hit that the woman wold haue refysted /  
Neuertheles in thende she was content / And thus  
the poure man restored the thowfand crownes to  
the Ryche / and demaunded of hym the honderd  
crownes / And the ryche full of frawde or fals-  
hede sayd to the poure / thow rendrest not to  
me al my gold / whiche thow fondest / For of  
hit I lack four honderd pyeces of gold And  
whanne thow shalt rendre and brynge to me  
ageyn the sayd four hondred pyeces of gold /  
thow shalt haue of me the C crownes too whiche  
I promyfed to the / And thenne the poure ansuerd  
to hym / I haue take and brought to the al that  
I haue found / wherfore they fylle in a grete  
dyfferent or stryf / in so moche that the cause  
came before the kyng / to be decyded and pletyd/  
of the whiche the kyng made to be callyd before  
hym a grete philosopher whiche was procuratour  
of the poures / And whanne the cause was wel  
disputed / the philosopher moued with pyte/  
called to hym the poure man / and to hym seyd  
in this maner / Come hyther my frend / by thy  
feythe hast thou restored alle that good whiche  
thou fondest in the purse / and the poure ansuerd  
to hym / ye syre by my feythe / And thenne the  
philosophre sayd before thassistantes / Syth this  
ryche man is trewe and feythfull / and that hit  
is not to byleue / that he shoulde demaunde more  
than

than he ought to doo / he ought to be byleued /  
And as to the other parte men muste byleue that  
this poure man is of good renomme and knownen  
for a trewe man wherfore the philosopher sayd  
to the kynge / Syre I gyue by my sentence / that  
thow take these thowfand crownes / and that an  
C thow take of them / the whiche hondred thow  
shalt delyuere to this poure man whiche fond  
them / And after whan he that hath lost them  
shall come / thow restore them to hym / And yf  
it happeth that another persone fynde the thow-  
sand & four C crownes / they shal be rendryd  
and taken ageyne to the same good man whiche  
is here present whiche sayth that he hath lost  
them / the whiche sentence was moche agreeable  
and plesaunt to al the compayne / And when the  
ryche man fawe that he was deceyued / he de-  
maunded myferycorde and grace of the kynge  
sayenge in this manere / Syre this poure man  
that hath fond my purse / trewely he hath re-  
stored it to me all that I onȝt to haue / but  
certaynly I wold haue deceyued hym / wherfore  
I praye the that thou wylt haue pyte and myfery-  
corde on me And thenne the kynge had myfery-  
corde on hym / And the poure man was wel  
contented and payd / and al the malyce of the  
ryche man was knownen and manyfested

**C** The v fable is of the scythe of the thre felawes.



Fte it happeth that the euyll whiche  
is procured to other cometh to  
hym whiche procureth it / as hit  
apperyth by the felawes / of the  
whiche tweyn were burgeys / &  
the thyrd a labourer / the whiche assembled them  
to gydre for to go to the holy sepulcre / This  
thre felawes made so grete prouysyon of flour for  
to make theyr pylgremage / in suche wyse / that  
it was all chauffed / and consumed / excepte only  
for to make one loef only / And whan the  
Burgeis sawe thende of theyre floure they sayd  
to gyder / yf we fynde not the maner and cau-  
tele for to begyle this vylayn / by cause that he  
is a rygt grete gallaunt / we shalle deye for hongre/  
wherfore we must fynde the maner and facyone  
that we may haue the loof whiche shall be maad  
of alle oure floor / And therfore they concluded  
to gyder and sayd / whanne the loof shalle be putte  
within the ouen we shalle go and lye vs for to  
slepe / and he that shalle dreme best / the loof  
shall

shall be his / And by cause that we bothe ben  
subtyle and wyse / he shalle not mowe dreme  
as wel as we shalle / wherof the loof be ours /  
wherof alle they thre were wel content / and al  
byganne to slepe /

¶ But whanne the labourer or vylayne knewe  
and perceyued all theyre fallace / and fawe that  
his two felawes were a sleep / he wente and  
drew the loof oute of the ouen and ete hit /  
¶ And after he feyned to be a slepe / and thene  
one of the burgeys rose vp / and sayd to hys felawes /  
I haue dremed a wonder dreme / For two Angels  
haue taken & borne me with grete Joye before  
the dyuyn mageste / And the other burgeys his  
felawe awoke and sayd / Thy dreme is merueyl-  
lous and wonderfull / but I suppose that the myn  
is fayrer than thyn is / For I haue dremed that  
two Angels drewe me on hard ground for to  
lede me in to helle / And after they dyd awake  
the vylayne whiche as dredeful sayd / who is  
there / and they ansuerd / we be thy felawes /  
And he sayd to them / how be ye soo foone  
retourned / And they answerd to hym / how  
retorne / we departed not yet fro hens / And he  
sayd to them by my feythe / I haue dremed that  
the Angels had led one of yow in to paradys or  
henen / and the other in to helle / wherfor I  
supposed / that ye shold neuer have comen  
ageyne /

ageyne / And therfore I aroos me fro sleep / and  
by cause I was hongry / I wente and drewe oute  
of the ouen the loef and ete hit / For ofte hit  
happeth that he whiche supposeth to begyle  
somme other / is hym self begyled.

**C** The vj fable is of the labourer and of the  
nyghtyngale



Omtyme there was a labourer /  
whiche had a gardeyn wel play-  
faunt and moche delycious / in to  
the whiche he ofte wente for to  
take his desporte and playture /  
And on a day at euen when he was very and  
had trauaylled sore / for to take his recreacion he  
entryd in to his gardyn and sette himself doune  
vnder a tree / where as he herd the songe of a  
nyghtyngale / And for the grete plesyre and Joye  
whiche he took therof / he sought and at the last  
fond the meanes for to take the nyghtyngale / to  
thende / that yet gretter joye and playfaunce he  
myght haue of hit / And whan the nyghtyn-  
gale was take / he demaunded of the labourer /  
wherfore hast thou take so grete Payne for to  
take me / For wel thou knowest that of me  
thow mayst not haue grete prouffyte / And the  
vylayne ansuerd thus to the nyghtyngale / For to  
here the songe of the I haue taken the / And the  
nyghtyngale ansuerd Certaynly in vayne thou  
haſt payned and laboured / For / for no good I  
wyll

wylle syng whyle that I am in pryon / And  
thenne the labourer or vylayne ansuerd / yf thou  
syngeſt not wel / I shalle ete the / And thenne  
the nyghtyngale ſayd to hym / yf thou putte me  
within a potte for to be foden / lytyl mete shalt  
thou thenne make of my body / and yf thou fettest  
me for to be roſted / leſſe mete shalle be thenne  
made of me / And therfor neyther boylded ne  
roſted shalle not be thy grete bely fyllē of me /  
but yf thou lete me flee / hit ſhall be to the a  
grete good prouffyte / For thre doctrynes I ſhall  
teche the whiche thou ſhalt loue better than  
thre fat kyne / and thene the labourer lete the  
nyghtyngale flee / And whan he was oute of his  
handes / and that he was vpon a tree / he ſayd to  
the vylayne in this maner / My Frend I haue  
promyſed to the / that I ſhall gyue to the thre  
doctrynes / wheroft the fyrfiſt is this that thou  
byleue no thynge whiche is Imposſyble / The  
ſecond is that thou kepe wel that thyn is / And  
the thyrd is / that thou take no forowe of the  
thyngel lost whiche may not be recouererd / And  
ſoone after the nyghtyngale beganne to fygne /  
& in his ſonge ſayd thus / bleſſyd be god / whiche  
hath delyuerd me oute of the handes of this  
vylayne or chorle / whiche hath not knownen /  
ſene / ne touched the precious dyamond whiche  
I haue within my bely / For yf he had foūde  
hit /

hit / he had be moche ryche / And fro his handes  
I had not scaped / And thenne the vylayne whiche  
herd this songe / beganne to complayne and to  
make grete forowe . and after sayd I am wel  
vnhappy / that haue lost so fayre a tresour /  
whiche I had wonne / and now I haue lost hit /  
And the nyghtyngale seyd thenne to the chorle /  
Now knowe I wel that thou arte a fool / For  
thow takest forowe of that wherof thow sholdest  
haue none / and sone thow haft for gotten my  
doctryne / by cause that thow wenest that within  
my bely shold be a precious stome more of weyght  
than I am / And I told and taught to the / that  
thow sholdest neuer byleue that thyng / which  
is Imposyble / And yf that stome was thyn / why  
haft thow lost hit / And yf thow haft lost hit and  
mayst not recouere hit / why takeſt thow forowe  
for hit / And therfore hit is foly to chasyſe or to  
teche a fole / whiche neuer byleueth the lernyng  
and doctryne whiche is gyuen to hym.

**C** The vij fable is of a Rethorycian and of a crowk backed /



Philosopher sayd ones to his sone /  
that whan he were falle by fortune  
in to somme dommage or perylle /  
the sooner that he myght he shold  
delyuere hym of hit / to thende /  
that afterward he shold no more be vexed ne  
greued of hit / As hit appiereth by this fable of a  
rethoryque man or sayr speker / whiche ones  
demaunded of a kynge / that of alle them whiche  
shold entre in to the cyte / hauyng somme faulter  
of . kynde on theyr bodyes / as crouked or coun-  
terfayted / he myght haue and take of them at  
thentre of the yate a peny / the whiche demaunde  
the kynge graunted to hym / and made his lettres  
to be sealed and wretton vnder his sygnet / And  
thus he kepte hym stylly at the yate / And of  
euery lame / scabbed / & of alle suche that had  
ony counterfaytour on theyr bodyes / he tooke a  
peny / **C** It happed thene on a day that a  
croukbacked and counterfayted man wold haue  
entryd within the Cyte withoute gyuynge of ony  
peny / and bethought hym self / that he shold  
take

take and put on hym a fayre mantel / and thus  
arayed came to the yate / ¶ And thenne whan  
the porter byheld hym / he perceyued that he  
was goglyed / and fayd to hym pay me of my  
dewte / And the goglyed wold paye nought /  
wherfore he toke from hym his mantel / And  
thenne he sawe that he was crowkbacked and  
fayd to hym / thow woldest not to fore paye a  
peny / but now thou shalte paye tweyne / ¶ And  
whyle that they stryued to gyder / the hat and  
the bonet felle from his hede to the erthe / And  
the porter whiche sawe his scabbed hede / fayd to  
hym / Now shalt thou paye to me thre pens /  
and thenne the porter yet ageyne setted his  
handes on hym / and felte / that his body was al  
scabbed / And as they were thus wrastlynge to  
gyder / the crowkbacked fylle to the ground /  
and hurted hym self fore on the legge / And the  
porter fayd thenne to hym / Now shalt thow  
paye v pens / For thy body is al counterfayted /  
wherfore thow shalt leue here thy mantele / And  
yf thou haddest payd a peny / thow haddest gone  
on thy waye free and quyte / wherfore he is wyse  
that payeth that / that he oweth of ryght / to  
thende that therof come not to hym gretter  
dommage

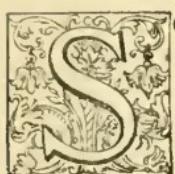
**C** The egypt fable is of the discyple / and of  
the sheep /



Discyple was somtyme / whiche  
toke his playfyre to reherce and  
telle many fables / the whiche  
prayd to his mayster / that he  
wold reherce vnto hym a long  
fable / To whome the mayster ansuerd / kepe and  
beware wel that hit happe not to vs / as it happed  
to a kyng and to his fabulatour And the discyple  
ansuerd / My mayster I pray the to telle to me  
how it befelle / And thenne the mayster sayd to  
his descyple / **C** Somtyme was a kynge whiche  
hadde a fabulatour / the whiche reherced to  
hym at euery tyme / that he wold sleep fyue  
fables for to reioysfhe the kynge / and for to  
make hym falle in to a slepe / It befelle thenne  
on a daye / that the kynge was moche forowful  
and so heuy / that he coude in no wyse falle a  
slepe / And after that the sayd fabulatour had  
told and reherced his fyue fables / the kynge  
desyred to here more / And thenne the sayd  
fabulatour recyted vnto hym thre fables wel  
þhortre / And the kynge thenne sayd to hym / I  
wold

wold fayne here one wel longe / And thenne  
shalle I leue wel the slepe / The fabulatour  
thenne reherced vnto hym suche a fable / Of a  
ryche man whiche wente to the market or feyre  
for to bye sheep / the which man bought a  
thowsand sheep / And as he was retornyng fro  
the feyre / he cam vnto a Ryuer / and by cause  
of the grete waiues of the water he coude not  
passe ouer the brydge / Neuertheles he wente  
soo longe to and fro on the Ryuage of the sayd  
Ryuer / that at the last he fonde a narowe way /  
vpon the whiche myght passe scant ynough thre  
sheep attones / And thus he passed and had them  
ouer one after another / And hyderto reherced  
of this fable / the fabulatour felle on slepe / And  
anon after the kynge awoke the fabulatour / and  
sayd to hym in this manere / I pray the that  
thow wylt make an ende of thy fable / And the  
fabulatour ansuerd to hym in this manere Syre  
this Ryuer is ryght grete / and the ship is lytyl /  
wherfore late the marzhaunt doo pass ouer his  
sheep / And after I shalle make an ende of my  
fable / And thenne was the kynge wel appeased  
and pacifyed / ¶ And therfore be thou content  
of that I haue reherced vnto the / For there is  
folke supersticious or capaxe / that they may not  
be contented with fewe wordes

¶ The ix fable is of the wulf / of the labourer /  
of the fore / & of the chese



Omtyme was a labourer wiche vnethe myght gourne and lede his oxen by cause that they fmote with theyr feet / wherfore the labourer sayd to them / I pray to god that the wulf may ete yow / the whiche wordes the wulf herd / wherfore he hyd hym self nyghe them vnto the nyght / And thenne came for to ete them / ¶ And whanne the nyght was come / the labourer vnbonde his oxen / and lete them goo to his hows / ¶ And thenne whanne the wulf sawe them comyng homeward / he sayd / O thou labourer many tymes on this day thou dydest gyue to me thyn oxen / and therfore hold thy promesse to me / ¶ And the labourer sayd to the wulf / I promyfed to the nought at al / in the presence of whome I am oblyged or bound / I swore not neyther to paye the / and the wulf ansuerd / I shalle not leue the goo / withoute that thou hold to me that / that thou promyfest and gauest to me / ¶ And as they had soo grete ftryf and descencion to gyder / they remytted  
the

the caufe to be discuted or pleted before the Juge / And as they were fechynge a Juge / they mette with the foxe / to whome they recounted or told alle theyr dyfferenſt and ſtryf / ¶ Thenne fayd the Foxe vnto them / I ſhalle accorde yow bothe wel / and I ſhalle gyue on your caufe or plee a good ſentence / But I muſt ſpeke with eche one of yow bothe a part or allone / And they were content / ¶ And the Foxe wente and told to the labourer / thow ſhalt gyue to me a good henne / And another to my wyf / And I ſhalle hit ſoo make / that thow with alle thyn oxen ſhalt freely goo vnto thy hows / wheroft the labourer was wel content / ¶ And after the foxe wente and fayd to the wulf / I haue wel laboured and wrought for the / For the labourer ſhall gyue to the therfore a grete cheſe / and lete hym goo home wyth his oxen / And the wulf was wel content /

¶ And after the Foxe fayd to the wulf / come thow wyth me / and I ſhalle lede the / where as the cheſe is / ¶ And thenne he ledde hym to and fro / here and there vnto the tyme that the mone shyned ful bryghtly / And that they came to a welle / vpon the whiche the Foxe lept / and ſhewed to the wulf the shadowe of the mone / whiche reluced in the well / & fayd to hym / loke now godſep / how that cheſe is fayre / grete

grete and brode / hye the now and goo doun  
& after take that cheſe / ¶ And the wulf ſayd  
to the Foxe / thow muſt be the fyrfte of vs  
bothe / that ſhalle goo doun / And yf thow  
mayſt not brynge hit with the / by cauſe of his  
greteneſſe / I ſhalle thenne goo doun for to  
helpe the / And the Foxe was content / by cauſe  
two bokettys were there / of whiche as the one  
came vpward / the other wente downward / and  
the foxe entryd in to one of the fame bokettis /  
and wente doun in to the Welle / And whanne  
he was doun / he ſayd to the wulf / godſep come  
hyther and helpe me / For the cheſe is fo moche  
and ſoo grete that I maye not bere hit vp / and  
thenne the wulf was aferd of that the Foxe ſhould  
ete hit / entryd wythynne the other boket / and  
as faſte as he wente downward / the Foxe came  
vpward / and whan the wulf ſawe the Foxe  
comyng vpward / he ſayd to hym / My godſep  
ye goo hens / thow fayſt trewe ſayd the Foxe /  
For thus hit is of the world / For when one  
cometh doun / the other goth vpward / and thus  
the foxe wente awey / and lefte the wulf within  
the welle / And thus the wulf loſt bothe the oxen  
and the cheſe / wherfore hit is not good to leue that  
whiche is ſure and certayne / For many one ben therof  
deceyued by the falſheid and decepcion of the  
Aduocate and of the Juges

**C** The x sable is of the husbond and of the  
moder & of hys wyf



Omtyme was a merchaunt whiche  
maryed hym to a yonge woman /  
the whiche had yet her moder on  
lyue / It happed that this Mar-  
chaunt wold ones haue gone som-  
where in to ferre country for to by some ware or  
marchaundysse / And as he was goynge / he betoke  
his wyf to her moder for to kepe and rewle  
her honestly tyll he come ageyne / **C** His wyf  
thenne . by the owne consentyng and wylle of  
her moder / enamoured her self of a ryght gen-  
tyl / fayre and yong man whiche fournysshed to  
thappoyntement / And ones as they thre made  
good chere the husbond came ageyne fro the  
feyre and knocked at the dore of the hows /  
wherfore they were wel abafhed / Thenne sayd  
the old moder thus to them / haue no fere / but  
doo as I shalle telle to yow / and care yow not /  
And thenne she sayd to the yonge man / hold  
this swerd / and goo thow to the yate / and be-  
ware thy self that thow saye no word to hym /  
but lete me doo / And as the husbond wold haue  
entyrd

entryd his hows / and that he fawe the yong  
man holdynge a naked fwerd in his handes / he  
was gretely aferd / And thenne the old woman  
sayd to hym / My fone thou arte ryght welcome /  
be not aferd of this man / For thre men ranne  
ryght now after hym for to haue slayne hym /  
and by auenture he fond the yate open / and this  
is the cause why he came here for to faue his  
lyf / And thenne the husbond said to them / ye  
haue done wel / And I can yow grete thanke /  
And thus the yonge amerous wente his waye  
surely by the subtylyte of the moder / of his wyf /  
to the whiche trusfe thy self not / and thou shalt  
doo as sage and wyse

¶ The xij fable is of an old harlotte or bawde



Noble man was somtyme / whiche  
had a wyf moche chaste and was  
wonder fayr / This noble man  
wold haue go on pylgrimage to  
Rome / and leste his wyf at home /  
by cause that he knewe her for a chaste and a  
good woman / ¶ It happed on a daye as she  
wente in to the toun A fayre yonge man was  
espryfed of her loue / and took on hym hardynes /  
and requyred her of loue / and promyfed to her  
many grete yestes / But the whiche was good had  
leuer deye than to consente her therto / wherfore  
the yonge man deyde almooste for sorowe / to  
the whiche felawe came an old woman / whiche  
demaunded of hym the caufe of his sekenesse /  
And the yonge man manyfested or descouered  
vnto her alle his courage and herte / askynge help  
and cunceytle of her / And the old woman  
wyly and malycious sayd to hym / Be thou  
gladde and Joyous / and take good courage / For  
wel I shalle doo / and brynge abouthe thy faytte /  
in soo moche thou shalt haue thy wyll fulfylled /  
And after thys the old bawde wente to her hows /  
and

and maade a lytyl catte which she hadde at  
homme to faste thre dayes one after another /  
And after she took somme breed with a grete  
dele or quantite of mostard vpon hit / and gaf hit  
to thys yonge Catte for to ete hit / ¶ And  
whanne the Catte smelled hit / she beganne to  
wepe and crye / ¶ And the old woman or  
Bawde wente vnto the hows of the sayd yonge  
woman / and bare her lytyl Catte with her / the  
whiche yonge and good woman receyued and  
welcomed her moch honestly / by cause that alle  
the world held her for a holy woman / ¶ And  
as they were talkynge to gyder / the yong woman  
hadde pyte of the catte whiche wepte / And  
demaunded of the old woman / what the cat  
eyled / And the old woman sayd to her / Ha a  
my fayr doughter & my fayre Frend / renewe  
not my sorowe / And sayinge these wordes she  
beganne to wepe / and sayd / My frend for no  
good I wyl tell the cause why my catte wepeth /  
And thenn / the yonge woman sayd to her / My  
good Moder I praye yow that ye wyll telle me  
the caufe & wherfor your catte wepeth / And  
thenne the old woman sayd to her / My Frend  
I wyll wel / yf thou wilt swere that thou shalt  
neuer reherce it to no body / to the whiche pro-  
misse the good and trewe yonge woman accorded  
her self / supposyng / that hit had ben all good  
and

and fayd / I wyll wel / And thenne the old woman fayd to her in this manere / My frend this fame catte whiche thou seest yonder was my daughter / the whiche was wonder fayre gracious and chaste / whiche a yonge man loued moche / and was so moche espryfed of her loue / that by cause that she refusid hym / he deyde for her loue / wherfore the goddes hauyng pyte on hym / haue torned my daughter in to this catte / And the yonge woman whiche suposid that the old woman had fayd trouthe fayd to her in this manere / Allas my fayr moder / I ne wote what I shalle doo / For suche a caas myght wel happe to me / For in this Towne is a yonge man / whiche deyeth almost for the loue of me / But for loue of my husband / to whome I oughte to kepe chaftyte / I haue not wylle graunte hym / Neuertheles I shall doo that / that thou shalt counceyll to me / And thenne the old woman fayd to her / My frend haue thou pyte on hym as foone as thou mayst / soo that hit befalle not to the lyke as it dyd to my doughter /

¶ The yonge woman thenne answerd to her / and fayd / yf he requyre me ony more / I shalle accorde me with hym / And yf he requyre me no more / yet shalle I profere me to hym / ¶ And to thende / that I offendre not the goddes / I thalle doo and accomlyfshe hit / as foone as I maye /

¶ The

¶ The old woman thene took leue of her / and  
wente forthwith to the yong man / And to hym  
she reherced and told all these tdynges / wherof  
hys herte was fylled with Joye / the whiche  
anone wente toward the yonge woman / and  
with her he fulfylled his wylle / ¶ And thus ye  
maye knowe the euyls / whiche ben done by  
bawdes and old harlottes / that wold to god /  
that they were al brente

**C** The xijable is of a blynd man and of  
his wif/



Here was somtyme a blynd man  
whiche had a fayre wif/ of the  
whiche he was moche Jalous / He  
kepte her so that she myght not  
goo nowher / For ewer he had her  
by the hand / And after that she was enamoured  
of a gentil felawe / they coude not fynde the  
maner ne no place for to fulfylle theyr wyll / but  
notwithstandyng the woman whiche was subtyle  
and Ingenyous cunceylded to her frende that he  
shold come in to her hows / and that he shold  
entre in the gardyn and that there he shold  
clymme vpon a pere tree / And he did as she  
told hym / and when they had made theyr enter-  
prise / the woman came ageyne in to the hows /  
and sayd to her husbond / My frende I praye yow  
that ye wylle go in to our gardyn for to despose  
us a lytel whyle there / of the whiche prayer the  
blynd man was wel content / and sayd to his  
wif / wel my good frende I will wel / lete vs go  
thyder / And as they were vnder the pere tree /  
she sayd to her husbond / My frende I praye the  
to

to lete me goo vpon the pere tre / And I shalle  
gader for vs bothe some fayre peres / wel my  
frend sayd the blynd man / I wylle wel & graūt  
thereto / And when she was vpon the tree / the  
yong man begann to shake the pere tree at  
one fyde / and the yonge woman at the other  
fyde / And And as the blynd man herd thus hard  
shake the pere tree / And the noyse whiche they  
made / he sayd to them / Ha a euyelle woman /  
how be it that I see hit not / Neuertheles I fele  
and vnderstante hit well / But I praye to the  
goddes / that they vouchesauf to fende me my  
fyght ageyne / And as soone as he had made his  
prayer Jupiter rendryd to hym his fyght ageyn  
**C** And whanne he fawe that pagent vpon the  
pere tree / he sayd to his wyf Ha vnhappy  
woman / I shalle neuer haue no Joye with the /  
And by cause that the yonge woman was redy  
in speche and malycious / she ansuerd forth with  
to her husbond / My frend thow arte wel be-  
holden and bounden to me / For by cause and  
for the loue the goddes haue restored to the thy  
fyght / wherof I thanke alle the goddes and  
godeffes whiche haue enhaunced and herd my  
prayer / For I defyryng moche that thow myght  
see me / cessed neuer day ne nyght to pray them /  
that theye wold rendre to the thy fyghte / wher-  
fore the goddefse Venus vysybly shewed her self  
to

to me / and sayd / that yf I wold somme play-  
fyre to the sayd yonge man she shold restore to  
the thy syght / And thus I am cause of it And  
thenne the good man sayd to her / My ryght  
dere wif & good frende / I remercye and thanke  
yow greately / For ryght ye haue and I grete  
wronge.

¶ The xiij fable is of the Tayller / of a kynge /  
and of his seruaunts

**M**en ought not to doo some other /  
that whiche he wold not that it  
were done to hym / As it appiereth  
by this present fable / of a kynge  
whiche had a tayller whiche was  
as good a workman of his craft / as ony was at  
that tyme in alle the world / the whiche tayller  
had with hym many good seruautes / wherof  
the one was called Medius / whiche furmounted  
alle the other in shapynge or sewynge / wher-  
fore the kyng commaunded to his styward that  
the sayd tayllers shold fare wel / and haue of the  
best metes and of delycious drynke / ¶ It happed  
on a daye that the mayster Styward gaf to them  
ryght good and delycious mete in the whiche  
was some hony / And by cause that Medius was  
not atte that feste / the styward sayd to the other /  
that they shold kepe for hym somme of their  
mete / And thenne the mayster tayller ansuerd /  
he must none haue / For yf he were here / he  
shold

shold not ete of hit / For he ete neuer no hony /  
And as they had done / Medius came / and de-  
maunded of his felawes / why kepte you not  
parte of this mete for me / And the styward  
ansuerd and sayd to hym / By cause that thy  
mayster sayd to me / that thow ete neuer no  
hony / no parte of the mete was kepte for the  
And Medius ansuerd thenne neuer one word /  
but beganne to thynke / how he myght paye his  
mayster / And on a day as the styward was allone  
with Medius / he demaunded of Medius / yf he  
knewe no man that coude werke as wel as his  
mayster / And Medius sayd nay / And that it  
was grete dommage of a sekenes that he had /  
And the styward demaunded what sekenes hit  
was / And thenne Medius ansuerd to hym / My  
lord whan he is entryd in to his franfy or  
wodenes / there cometh vpon hym a rage / And  
how thalle I knowe hit sayd the styward / Cer-  
tainly my lord sayd Medius / whan ye shall fee  
that he shalle sette at his werke / and that he  
shalle loke here and there / and thal snyte vpon  
his borde with his syft / theñe may ye know  
that his sekenesse cometh on hym / And thene  
withoutye take and bynde hym and also bete  
hym wel / he shalle doo grete harme and dom-  
age / And the styward sayd to hym / Care not  
therof my frend / For wel I shalle beware my  
self

self of hym / And on the mornynge next folow-  
yng the stward came for to see the tayllers /  
And whan Medius whiche knewe wel the cause  
of his comynge / tooke awaye secretely his  
maysters sheres / and hydde them / And anone  
his mayster beganne for to loke after them / and  
fawe and ferched al aboute here and there / and  
beganne to simyte his fyste vpon the borde / And  
thenne the mayster stward beganne to loke on  
his maners / and sodenly made hym to be take  
and holde by his seruaunts / And after made  
hym to be bond and wel beten / Thenne was  
the mayster tayller al abafshed / and demaūded  
of them / My lordes wherfor doo ye bete me soo  
outrageously / what offense haue I done / wher-  
fore I must be bound and thus be bete / And  
thenne the Styward sayd to hym in thys maner /  
by cause that Medius told me / that thou art  
frantyk And yf thou be not wel bete / thou  
sholdest doo grete harme and dommage / And  
thene the mayster came to his seruaunt Medius  
and rygorously sayd to hym / Ha a euyl boye  
fylled whan [with] euylle wordes / whan sawest  
thou me madde / And his seruaunt proudly  
ansuerd to hym / My mayster whan dydest thou  
see that I ete no hony / And therfore I threwe  
to the one bole for another / And the mayster  
stward / and alle his seruaunts beganne thenne to  
lawhe

lawhe / and sayd al that he hadde wel done /  
¶ And therfore men ought not to doo to ony  
other that thyng whiche they wylle not that  
men dyd to them /

¶ Here enden the fables of Alfonce  
¶ And solowen other fables of Poge the Floren-  
tyn

**C**The syrſt fable is of the subtylite of the woman  
for to deceuge her husband



He cautele or falshede of the woman  
is wonder merueyllous / as it ap-  
piereth by this fable / Of a mar-  
chaūt whiche was wedded of newe  
vnto a fayre and yong woman /  
the whiche marchaunt wente ouer the fee for to  
bye & selle / and for to gete somwhat for to lyue  
honestly / And by caufe that he dwellyd to longe/  
his wyf supposed that he was dede / And ther-  
fore she enamoured her self with another man /  
whiche dyd to her mykle good / as for to haue  
doo make and bylde vp his hows of newe the  
whiche had grete nede of reparacion / and also he  
gaf to her all new utensyles to kepe houſhold /  
And within a long tyme after the departyng of  
the marchaunt he came ageyne in to his hows  
whiche he fawe newe bylded / & fawe dyffhes  
pottes / pannes / and ſuche other houſhold / wher-  
fore he demaunded of his wyf how and in what  
maner ſhe had foūde the facion and the mean  
for to haue repayred ſo honestly his hows / And  
ſhe anſuerd that it was by the grace of god / And  
he

he ansuerd / Bleffyd be god of hit / And when he  
was within the chambre / he sawe the bedde  
rychely couerd / & the walles wel hanged / and  
demaunded of his wyf he had done before / And  
she thenne ansuerd to hym in lyke maner as she  
dyd before / And therfore he thanked god as he  
had done to fore / And as he wold sette hym at  
his dyner / there was brought before hym vnto  
his wyf a child of thre yere of age / or there  
aboute / wherfore he demaunded of his wyf /  
My frend to whomie belongeth this fayre child /  
And she ansuerd / My Frend the holy ghoost of  
his gracie hath sente hit to me / Thene ansuerd  
the merchaunt to his wyf in this manere / I  
rendre not graces ne thankes not to the holy  
ghoost of this / For he hath taken to moche  
payne and labour for to haue it made up myn  
owne werke / And I wyll that in no maner wyse  
he medle no more therwith / For suche thynge  
belongeth to me for to doo hit / and not to the  
holy ghoost.

**C** The second fable is of the woman and of  
the ypocryte



He generacion or byrth of the ypocryte is moche dampnable and euylle / As it appiereth by this fable / and as poge reherceth to vs whiche sayth / that somtyme he fond hym self in a good felauship / where he herd a fable / whiche was there reherced / Of the whiche the tenour foloweth / and seyth the sayd poge / that of alle the goodes of this world / the ypocrytes ben possessours / For how be hit / that an ypocryte haue somtyme wylle for to helpe somme poure and Indygent / Neuertheles he hath a condycyon within hym self / that is to wete / that he shold rather see a man at the poynct of dethe than for to faue his lyf of an halfpenny / And this presumpcion is called ypocryfye / as ye shal here herafter by the fable folowyng the whiche sayth that one beynge in the felauship of Poge reherced / that somtyme the custome of alle the poure was that they wente before the folkes dores withoute sayenge ony word It happed thenne on that tyme that a poure man moche

moche faire and of good lyf wente to serch  
his lyf fro one dore to another / And vpon a  
day emonge other he wente and sette hym self  
vpon a grete stone before the yate of a wydowe /  
whiche wydowe was acustommed to gyue hym  
euer somwhat / ¶ And whan the good woman  
knewe that he was at hir dore the dyd bryng  
to hym his porcion as she was custommed for to  
doo / And as the gaf to hym the mete the loked  
on hym / and seyng hym so fayre / and wel  
made of body / she thenne fylled of carnal con-  
cupiscence / and brennyng in the fyre of loue /  
requered and Instantly prayd hym that he wold  
retorne thyder within thre dayes / and promysed  
to him that she shold gyue to hym a ryght good  
dyner / And the poure man sayd to her that he  
shold doo so / and whanne he came ageyne / he  
sette hym self as before / atte dore of the wydowes  
hows / whiche the woman knewe well whanne  
he shold come / wherfore he came to the yate  
and sayd / Come within good man / For now we  
shalle dyn / to the whiche prayer the poure  
man assented / & entred within the hows / the  
whiche wydowe gaf to hym good mete / and  
good drynke / And whanne they had wel dyned /  
the fayd wydowe presyd the good man strongly  
and after the kyssed hym / requyryng hym / that  
she might haue the copye of his loue / And thenne

the poure man al ashamed & vergoynous knowynge her thoughte and her wylle / ansuerd thus to her Certaynly my good lady I dare not / but neuertheles he wold fayne haue done hit / And the wydowe al embraced with loue beseched and prayd hym more and more / And thenne whan the poure man sawe that he myght not excuse hym self / he sayd to the wydowe in this manere / My frend syth that thou defyrest it for to doo soo moche and soo grete an euylle / I take god to my wytnes / that thou arte causer of hit / For I am not consentynge to the faytte or dede / but sayenge these wordes he consented to her wylle

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C The thyrd fable is of a yonge woman whiche accused her husband of coulpe or blame

[Omitted. Cf. Poggio *Facetiae* 45.]

C The fourth fable is of the hunteynge and  
hawkynge



Oge Florentyn rehereth to vs / how ones he was in a felauiship where men spak of the superflue cure of them whiche gouerne the dogges and hawkes / wherof a mylannoys named Paulus beganne to lawhe / and lawhyng requyred of Poge that he wold reherce somme fable of the sayd hawkes / And for loue of alle the felauiship he sayd in thys manere / Somtyme was a medecyn whiche was a Mylannoys This medecyn heled al foiles of al maner of foly / and how & in what manere he dyd hele them / I shall telle hit to you This medecyn or leche had within his hows a grete gardyn And in the myddes of hit was a depe and a brode pytte / whiche was ful of stynkyng and Infected water / And within the same pytte the sayd medecyn put the foiles after the quantyte of theyr folysshnes / somme vnto the knes / and the other vnto the bely / And there he bonde them fast at a post / but none he putte deeper / than vnto the stomack for doubte of gretter Inconuenient / It happed

happed thenne that emonge other was one  
brought to hym / whiche he putte in to the fayd  
water vnto the thyes / And whan he had be by  
the space of xv dayes within the fayd water / he  
beganne to be peasyble and gate his wytte ageyne /  
And for to haue take somme disperte and consola-  
cion he prayd to hym whiche had the kepyng  
of hym that he wold take hym oute of the water /  
and promyfed to hym that he shold not departe  
fro the gardyn / And thenne the kepar that kepte  
hym vnbounde hym fro the stake / and had hym  
oute of the water / And whanne he had be  
many dayes oute of the pytte / he wente wel vnto  
the yate of the gardyn / but he durst not go oute /  
lesse that he shold be put ageyne within the fayd  
pytte / And on a tyme he went aboue vpon the  
yate / and as he loked al aboute / he sawe a fayr  
yong man on a horsbak / whiche bare a spere-  
hawk on his fyfte / and had with hym two fayre  
spaynels / whereof the fayd sole was al abashed /  
And in dede as by caas of nouelte / he callyd  
the fayd yong man / and after he fayd to hym  
benyngly / My frend I praye the that thou wilt  
telle me what is that wherupon thow arte sette /  
And thenne the yonge sone fayd to hym / that  
it was a hors whiche prouffited to hym to the  
chace / and bare hym where he wold / And after  
the sole demaunded of hym / And what is that  
whiche

whiche thou berest on thy fyste / and wher to is  
it good / and the yong man ansuerd to hym / It  
is a sperehawk whiche is good for to take par-  
tryches and quaylles / And yet ageyne the fole  
demaunded of hym / My frend what are thoos  
that folowe the / & wherto ben they good / And  
the yonge man ansuerd to hym / they be dogges  
whiche are good for to ferche and fynde partryches  
& quaylles / And whan they haue reyfed them/  
my sperehawke taketh them / wherof procedeth  
to me grete solas and playfyre / And the fole  
demaunded ageyne / To your aduys the takyng  
that ye doo by them in a hole yere / how moche  
is hit / shalle hit bere to the grete proutfyte /  
And the yong man ansuerd to hym four or fyue  
crownes or ther aboute / And no more sayd the  
fole / And to your aduys how moche shalle they  
dispende in a yere / And the yong man ansuerd  
xl or l crownes / ¶ And whanne the fole herd  
these wordes / he sayd to the sayd yonge man / O  
my frend I pray the that foone thow wylt departe  
fro hens / For yf our syficien come / he shalle  
putte the within the sayd pytte by cause that  
thow arte a fole / I was put in it vnto the thyse/  
but therin he shold putte the vnto the chynne/  
for thow doft the grettest foly that euer I herd  
speke of / ¶ And therfore the studye of the  
huntynge and hawkynge is a flouful cure / And  
none

none ought to doo hit withoute he be moche  
ryche and man of lyuelode / And yet hit ought  
not to be done ful ofte / but somtyme for to take  
disporte and solas / and to dryue awey melan-  
cholye.

**C** The b sable is of the recytacion of somme  
monstres



Oge of Florence recyteth how in his tyme one named Hugh prynce of the medycyns / fawe a catte whiche had two hedes and a calf whiche also had two hedes

And his legges bothe before and behynde were double / as they had be Joyned al to gyder / as many folke fawe / Item about the marches of ytalye withynne a medowe was somtyme a Cowe / the whiche Cowe maade and delyuerd her of a serpent of wonder and Ryght merueylous gretenesse / Ryghte hydous and ferdful / **C** For fyrshe he hadde the heede gretter than the hede of a calf / **C** Secondly / he had a necke of the lengthe of an Asse / And his body made after the lykeneisse of a dogge / and his taylle was wonder grete / thycke and longe withoute comparyson to ony other .

**C** And whanne the Cowe fawe that she hadde maade suche a byrthe / And that within her bely she had borne soo ryght horruble a beefe / she was al ferdful / and lyfte her self up / and supposed

supposed to haue fledde aweye / but the Serpent with his wonder longe taylle enlaced her two hynder legges / And the Serpent thenne beganne to souke the Cowe / And in dede foo moche / and foo longe he fouked tylle that he fond somme mylke / ¶ And whanne the Cowe myght escape fro hym / she fledde vnto the other kyne / ¶ And Incontynent her pappes and her behynder legges and all that the Serpent touched was all black a grete space of tyme ¶ And soone after the sayd Cowe maade a fayre calf / The whiche merueylle was announced or sayd to the sayd Pope he beyng atte Ferrare / ¶ And yet ageyne soone after that / ther was fond within a grete Ryuer a monstre maryn / or of the fee of the forme or lyknesse whiche foloweth /

¶ Fyrste he hadde from the nauylle vpward the symplaytude or lykenesse of a man / And fro the nauylle dounward / he had the fourme or makynge of a Fyssh / the whiche parte was iummelle that is to wete double / ¶ Secondly he hadde a grete berd / and he hadde two wonder grete hornys aboue his eres / ¶ Also he hadde grete pappes / and a wonder grete and horruble mouthe / and his handes retched unto his entraylles or bowellys / And at the bothe his elbowes he hadde wynges ryght brode and grete  
of

of fysshies mayles / wherwith he swymmed / and  
only he hadde but the hede oute of the water /  
¶ It happed thenne as many wymmen bouked  
and weshed at the porte or hauen of the sayd  
Ryuer / that thys horrable and ferdfull beeste  
was / for lacke and defaulte of mete cam &  
swymmyng toward the sayd wymen / Of the  
which he toke one by the hand / and supposid  
to hane drawe her in to the water / but she was  
stronge / and wel auyed and resysted ageynste  
the sayd monstre / And as she deffended her  
self / she beganne to crye with a hyhe voys / help  
help / to the whiche came rennyng fyeue wym-  
men / whiche by hurlynge and drawynge of  
stones kyld and flewe the sayd monstre / For he  
was come to ferre within the sonde / wherfore he  
myght not retorne in the depe water / And after  
whanne he rendryd his spyrte / he made a ryght  
lytyl crye / sayenge wo that he was so deformed  
and soo moche cruel / For he was of grete corpul-  
lence more than ony man's body / And yet sayth  
Poge in this manere / that he beyng at Ferrare he  
fawe the sayd monstre / And saith yet / that the  
yonge children were customed for to go bathe  
and weshed them within the sayd Ryuer / but  
they came not all ageyne / wherfore the wymen  
weshed ne bouked nomore theyr clothes at the  
said porte / For the folke presumed and supposid  
that

that the monstre kyld the yonge children / whiche  
were drowned / ¶ Item also within a lytyl whyle  
after hit befelle aboute the marches of ytaly that  
a child of fourme humayne whiche hadde two  
hedes and two vysfages or faces beholdynge one  
vpon the other / & the armes of eche other  
embraced the body / the whiche body fro the  
nauyl vpward was Joyned sauf the two hedes /  
and from the nauyll dounward the lymmes were  
all separed one fro other in suche wyse that  
the lymmes of generacion were shewed many-  
festly / Of the whiche child the tedynges came  
vnto the persone of the pope of Rome

**C** The syrthe fable is of the parson / of his  
dogge / And of the Bisshop



Yluer dothe and causeth alle thyngē  
to be done vnto the halowynge  
ageyne of a place whiche is pro-  
phane or Interdicte / As ye shalle  
mowe here by thys presente Fable /

**C** Of a preest dwellynge in the countrey whiche  
sonytyme had a dogge / whiche he loued moche /  
the whiche preest was moche ryche / The sayd  
dogge by processe of tyme deyde / & whan he was  
dede / he entered and buryed hit in the chirche  
yerd for cause of the grete loue whiche he loued  
hym / it happed thenne on a day his bisshop  
knewe hit by thaduertyfement of somme other /  
wherfore he sente for the sayd preest / and sup-  
posed to haue of hym a grete somme of gold /  
or els he shold make hym to be straytly punyfished /  
And thenne he wrote a lettred vnto the sayd preest  
of whiche the tenour conteyned only that he  
shold come and speke with hym / And whan the  
preest had redde the lettres / he vnderstood wel  
alle the caas / and presupposed or bethought in  
his courage / that he wold haue of hym somme

syluer /

v

syluer / For he knewe wel ynough the condy-  
cions of his bisshop / & forth with he toke his  
breuyarye / & an C crownes with hym / the pre-  
late beganne to remembre and to shewe to hym  
the enormyte of his mysdede / And to hym  
answerd the preest whiche was ryght wyse say-  
enge in this manere / O my ryght reuerende  
fader / yf ye knewe the souerayne prudence of  
whiche the sayd dogge was fylled / ye shold not  
be merueyld yf he hath wel desernyd for to be  
buryed honestly and worshipfully amonge the men/  
he was al fylled with humayn wytte as wel in his  
lyf / as in thartycle of the dethe / And thenne the  
bisshop sayd / how may that be / reherce to me  
thenne al his lyf / Certaynly ryght reuerende fader  
ye ought wel to knowe that whanne he was atte  
thartycle and at the poynt of dethe / he wold  
make his testament / And the dogge knowyng  
your grete nede and Indygence / he bequethed  
to yow an C crownes of gold / the whiche I  
brynge now vnto yow / And thenne the Bisshop  
for loue of the money he affoylled the prest And  
also graunted the sayd sepulture / And therfore  
syluer causeth alle thyng to be graunted or  
done.

¶ The viij fable is of the Foxe of the Cock and of  
the dogges

lle the fallary or payment of them  
that mokken other is for to be  
mocqued at the last / as hit ap-  
piereth by this present Fable / of  
a Cock whiche somtyme sawe a  
fox comyng toward hym hongry and  
famyshed / whiche Cock supposid Wel that he  
came not toward hym / but for to ete somme  
henne / for whiche cause the Cock maade al his  
hennes to flee vpon a tree / And whan the foxe  
beganne tapproche to the said tree / he began to  
erye toward the cock good tydynges good tyd-  
ynges / And after he salewed the cok ryght  
reuerently / & demaunded of hym thus / O god-  
sep / what dost thou ther soo hyghe / And thy  
hennes with the / hast not thou herd the good  
tydynges worthy and prouffitable for vs ¶ And  
thenne the Cok ful of malyce ansuerd to hym /  
Nay veryly godsep / but I praye the / telle and  
reherce them vnto vs / Thenne sayd the foxe to  
the cok / Certaynly godsep / they be the best  
that euer ye herd / For ye may goo and come /  
talke

talke and communyque emong alle beeftes withoute ony harme or dommage / And they shalle doo to yow bothe pleasyr and alle seruyse to them possible / for thus it is concluded and accorded / and also confermed by the grete cunceyll of all bestes / And yet they haue made commaundement that none be so hardy to vexe ne lette in no wyfe ony other / be it neuer so lytyll a beeft / For the whiche good tydynge I praye the / that thow wylt come doune / to thende / that we may goo and syng / Te deum laudamus / for Joye / And the cok whiche knewe wel the fallaces or falshede of the foxe ansuerd to hym in this manere / Certaynly my broder and my good Frend thow haft brought to me ryght good tydynge / wherof more than C tymes I shalle thanke the / And sayenge these wordes the Cock lyfte vp his neck / and his feet / and loked farre fro hym / And the foxe sayd to hym / what godsep / where aboute lokest thow / And the Cok ansuerd to hym / Certaynly my broder I see two dogges stongly and lyghtly rennyng hytherward with open mouthes / whiche as I suppose come for to bryng to vs the tydynge whiche thou haft told to vs / And thenne the Foxe whiche shoke for fere of the two dogges sayd to the Cock / god be with you my frend / It is tyme that I departe fro hens / or these

theſe two dogges come nerer / And ſayinge theſe  
 wordes toke his waye / & ranne as fast as he  
 myght / And thenne the cock demaunded and  
 cryed after hym / godſep / why renneſt thou  
 thus / yf the ſayd paſte is accorded / thou ougheſt  
 not to double no thyng / Ha a godſep ſayd the  
 Foxe from ferre / I doubtē that theſe two dogges  
 haue not herd the decreet of the pees / And  
 thus whanne a begyler is begyled / he receyued  
 the fallary or payement / whiche he ought to  
 haue / wherfore lete euery man kepe hym ſelf  
 ther fro



Ogius reherceth that there were two  
 wymmen in Rome / whiche he  
 knewe of dyuerſe age and forme /  
 which came to a Curteyzan by  
 caufe to haue and wynne ſomwhat  
 wyth theyr bodyes / whome he receyued and  
 happed that he knewe the fayrest of bothe twyes /  
 and that other ones / and ſoo departed / And  
 afterward whanne they ſhould departe / he gaf to  
 them a pyece of lynen clothe / not decernynge  
 how moche eche of them ſhould haue to her  
 parte and porcion / And in the partynge of the  
 ſayd clothe fylle bitwene the wymmen a ſtryf by  
 caufe

cause one of them demaunded two partes after  
thexygence of her werke / And that other the  
half after theyre persones / eche of them shew-  
yng dyuerly theyr resons / that one sayeng that  
she hadde suffred hym twyes to doo his pleasyr /  
and that other pretended / that she was redy and  
in her was no defawte And soo fro wordes they  
came to strokes and cratchyng with naylys /  
and drawynge theyr here / in so moche that  
theyr neyghbours came to this batayll for to  
departe them / And also of theyr owne and  
propre husbondes / not knowynge the cause of  
theyr stryf and debate / eche of them defendynge  
his wyues cause / And fro the fyghtynge of the  
wymmen hit aroos and came to theyr husbondes  
with buffettis and castynge of stones / soo longe  
that men ranne bytwene them / And after  
the customme of Rome bothe the husbondes  
were brought to pryon berynge enemyte eche  
to other / & knewe no thynge the cause wher-  
fore / The sayd cloth is sette in the handes of  
the wymen secretely yet not departed / but is  
secretely argued amonge the wymmen in what  
wyse that this mater shal be deuyded / And I  
demaunde of doctoures what the lawe is of it

¶ He sayeth also that a marchaunt of Florence  
bought an hors of a man / and made his couenaunt  
with

with the sellar for xxv ducattes for to paye forth-  
with in hande xv ducattes / And as for the rest  
he shold abyde dettour and owe / And the sellar  
was content / and therupon delyuerd the hors and  
receyued the xv ducattes / After this a certayne  
terme the sellar demaunded of the byar the  
residue / And he denyed the payment / & had  
hym hold his couenant / For the byer sayd we  
were accorded that I shold be thy debtour / And  
yf I shold satysfe and paye the I shold nomore  
be thy dettour / et cetera / and soo he abode  
dettour



E telleth also that ther was a carryk  
of Jene hyred in to frauce for to  
make warre ayenst englischmen /  
of the whiche caerrick the patron  
bare in his sheld painted an oxe  
hede / whiche a noble man of frauce beheld and  
fawe / & sayd he wold auenge hym on hym that  
bare tho armes / wherupon aroos an altercacion  
so moche / that the frenschman prouoked the  
Janueye to bataylle and fyght therfore / The  
Januey acceptyd the prouocacion / & came at  
the day assignd in to the felde withoute ony  
araye or habyllements of warre / And that other  
frenſſhe man came in moche noble apparayll in  
to the feld that was ordeyned / & thēne the  
patrone of the carrik said wherfore is it that  
we two shold this day fyght & make bataill fore  
I faye said that other that thyn armes ben myn /  
& bylonged to me to fore that thou haddest  
them / Thenne the Januey said It is no nede to  
make ony bataylle therfore / For the armes that  
I bere is not the hede of an oxe but it is the hede  
of a cowe whiche thyngē so spoken the noble  
Frenſſhe man was abashed and so departed half  
mocqued



Iſo he faith that ther was a phisycyen  
dwellyng in a Cyte / whiche was  
a grete & a connynge man in that  
seyence / & he had a seruaūt a  
yong man whiche made pylles  
after a certayne forme that he shewed to hym /  
& whan this yong man / had dwellid long with  
hym / & coude parfʒtly make the pylles / he  
departed fro his mayster / and went in to ſtraūge  
coultre where as he was knowen / and lete men  
there to vnderſtonde that he was a connynge  
phisycyen / and coude gyue medycynes for al  
maner maladyes and ſekenesſes / and mynifyred  
alwey his pylles to every man that came to hym  
for ony remedy / And hit was ſoo that a poure  
man of that place where he was came to hym / and  
complayned how he had loſte his aſſe / and prayd  
hym to gyue to hym a medycyne for to fynde  
his aſſe ageyne / And he gaf to hym the ſayd  
pylles / & badde hym to receyue and take them /  
And he ſhould fynde his aſſe / And this poure  
man dyd ſoo / and after wente in to the feldes  
and pastures to ſeke and loke after his aſſe / And  
ſoo doyng the pylleys wrongth ſoo in his bely /  
that he muſt nedes go purge hym / and went  
amonge

amonge the reed and there easyd hym / And anonet here he fonde his asse / wherof he beyng moche Joyeful ranne in to the toune / and told and proclaimed / that by the medecyn that he had receyued of the phisycyen he had found his asse / whiche thynge knowen alle the symple peple reputed hym for a moche connynge man / whiche coude no thynge doo but maké pyllyes / And thus many fooles are ofte taken for wyse and connynge / For he was reputed to hele all maner sekenesses / and also to fynde asses.



Here was in a certayne towne a wydower wowed a wydowe for to haue and Wedde her to his wyf / And at the last they were agreed and sured to gyder / ¶ And whan a yonge woman beynge seruaunt with the wydowe herd therof / she came to her maystresse / and sayd to her / Allas maystresse what haue ye doo / why sayd she / I haue herd say sayd the mayde / that ye be assured and shalle wedde suche a man / And what thenne sayd the wydowe / Allas sayd the mayde I am fory for yow / by cause I haue herd saye that he is a peryllous man / For he laye so ofte and knewe

fo

so moch his other wyf that she deyde therof /  
 And I am sorry therof / that yf ye shold falle in  
 lyke caas / to whome the wydowe answerd and  
 sayd / Forsothe I wold be dede / For ther is but  
 sorowe and care in this world / This was a  
 curteys excuse of a wydowe



Ow thenne I wylle fynyshe alle  
 these fables wyth this tale that  
 foloweth whiche a worshipful  
 preest and a parson told me late/  
 he sayd / that there were duell-  
 lynge in Oxensford two prestes bothe maystres of  
 arte / of whome that one was quyck and coude  
 putte hym self forth / And that other was a good  
 symple preest / And soo it happed that the  
 mayster that was perte and quyck was anone  
 promoted to a benefyce or tweyne / and after to  
 prebendys / and for to be a Dene of a grete  
 prynces chappel / supposyng and wenynge that  
 his felaw the symple preest shold neuer haue be  
 promoted but be alwaye an Annuel / or at the  
 most a paryshe preest / So after longe tyme that  
 this worshipful man this dene came rydynge in  
 to a good paryshe with a x or xij horses / lyke a  
 prelate / and came in to the chirche of the sayd  
 paryshe / and sond there this good symple man  
 somtyme

somtyme his felawe / whiche cam and welcomed  
hym lowely / And that other badde hym good  
morowe mayster Johan / and toke hym fleyghtly  
by the hand / and axyd hym where he dwellyd /  
And the good man sayd in this parysh / how  
sayd he / are ye here a sowle preest or a parysh  
preste / nay syr said he / for lack of a better  
though I be not able ne worthy I am parson  
and curate of this paryshe / and thenne that  
other aualed his bonet and said mayster par-  
son I praye yow to be not despleasyd / I had  
supposyd ye had not be benefyced / But mayster  
sayd he / I pray yow what is this benfyce worth  
to yow a yere / Forsothe sayd the good symple  
man / I wote neuer / for I make neuer accomptes  
thereof / how wel I haue had hit four or fyue  
yere / And knowe ye not said he what it is  
worth / it shold seme a good benefyce / no For-  
sothe sayd he / But I wote wel what it shalle be  
worth to me / Why sayd he / what shalle hit be  
worth / Forsothe sayd he / yf I doo my trewe  
dylygēce in the cure of my paryshēs in prechynge  
and techynge / and doo my parte longynge to  
my cure / I shalle haue heuen therfore / And yf  
theyre sowles ben lost or ony of them by my  
defawte / I shall be punysshed therfore / And  
herof am I sure / And with that word the ryche  
dene was abashed And thought he shold be the  
better /

better / And take more hede to his cures and  
benefyces than he had done / This was a good  
answere of a good preest and an honest /

And here with E synyslhe this book / translated  
& emprynted by me William Carton at  
Westimynster in thabbey / and synysshed  
the xxvj dage of Marche the yere  
of oure lord M CCCC lxxiiij /  
And the syrst yere of the  
regne of Kyng Rych-  
ard the thyrde.

## ERRATA.

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Those in Gothic are in the original Caxton.

Page.	Line.	Tcceth/ Thcunc,	
6	11		teeth / Thenne.
22	4	auducyte,	andacyte.
29	12	gunnes,	gynnes.
35	7	nygt,	nyȝt.
47	12	conenaunces,	conuenances.
54	20	double,	doubte.
58	9	rygte,	ryȝte.
74	1	Sevntb,	vȝ.
92	8	grcde,	grete.
102	17	eylle,	euylle.
103	10	folowith,	foloweth.
105	18	beaulte,	beaute.
111		No heading.	
112	20	enhanced,	enhaunced.
115	16	aso,	also.
"	21	mone,	
116	17	ypocytes,	ypoerytes.
117	13	vysyed,	vysyted.
119	2	eyyle,	euylle.
120	3	behodeth,	behoueth.
120	12	thyn conuenynt,	thynconuenyent.
128	22	uf,	yf.
138	1	knyggt,	knyght.
"	25	fend,	and.
145	5	raynfull,	raynfall.
198	7	thexcasacions,	thexcusacions.
204	15	eylle,	euylle.
215	15	tban dyd.	then hyt dyd.
221	3	he he,	he.
232	4	sommen of a,	som men of a.
234	12	and byldctb,	omit and.
238	24	ppseccsour,	poffessour.
241	21	ond,	and.
246	17	And And,	And.
"	22	lassc,	lesse.
247	22	inhance,	enhaūce.
248	16	sacryfyed,	sacryfyfed.
251	13	Arabc,	a Rabe.
266	5	thc,	thre.
276	3	wgicbe,	whiche.
277	2	scchynge,	seckynge.
286	9	euylle,	euylle.
313	8	parfzly,	parfizly.
"	23	wrongtb,	wrought.

## GLOSSARY.

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abhomynable, 112  
adommage, *hurt*, 237  
aguysse, *adorn*, 3  
almesse, *alms*, 60  
ambassade, *embassy*, 87  
amerous, *lover*, 280  
Annuel (*generally Annueler*,  
*cf. Chaucer, Cant. Tales*,  
12,940), *priest who says*  
*masses on the anniversary*  
*of death*, 315  
aspyed, *spied*, 61  
assoylled, *absolved*, 306  
aswowned, *in a swoon*, 159  
aualed, *took off*, 316  
aubyer, *bramble*, 234  
  
backe, *bat*, 70  
balkes, *ridges in fields*, 202,  
203  
berd, *beard*, 116  
bienfayttes, *benefits*, 254  
boot, *bote*, *bit*, 14, 168  
bouked, *boiled*, 303

brente, *burnt*, 284  
breste, *burst*, 61  
burgeys, *citizen*, 266  
  
can, *know*, 179, 221, 280?  
carryk, *galley*, 312  
Caym, *Cain*, 73  
caytyf, *cunning*, 21  
chepe, *sell*, 252  
commysed, *committed*, 63  
condempned, *condemned*, 63,  
254, 262  
cope, *canopy*, 173  
corryged, *chastened*, 25, 89  
countersayt, *deceive*, 272, 273  
eratchyng, *scratching*, 310  
crymynous, *criminal*, 63  
curtois, *courtous*, 98  
curteys, *cunning* (?), 315  
Cyrurgeons, *surgeons*, 99,  
157  
  
dagged, *jagged*, 152  
dees, *dice*, 241

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|--|--|
| <p>departed, <i>divided</i>, 310<br/>     dommage, <i>danger</i>, 85<br/>     dommageable, <i>dangerous</i>, 77<br/>     doubtous, <i>doubtful</i>, 67, 120,<br/>         181, 188</p> <p>empeched, <i>prevented</i>, 246,<br/>         247</p> <p>ensample, <i>example</i>, 85<br/>     ensyewe, <i>pursue</i>, 30<br/>     entremete, <i>meddle with</i>, 24,<br/>         25, 129</p> <p>entre, <i>entrance</i>, 253<br/>     erys, <i>ears</i>, 186, 220<br/>     esprysed, <i>taken</i>, 281, 283<br/>     euerychone, <i>every one</i>, 230<br/>     excusations, <i>excuses</i>, 198</p> <p>facyle, <i>easy</i>, 97<br/>     fallace, <i>frand</i>, 267<br/>     fayt, <i>deed</i>, 251<br/>     flough, <i>flew</i>, 132<br/>     flyes, <i>fleece</i>, 191<br/>     force, <i>give no, care not</i>, 176<br/>     formyce, <i>ant</i>, 55<br/>     fyerste, <i>fierceness</i>, 68</p> <p>gallaunt, <i>glutton</i> (?), 266<br/>     glose, <i>comment</i>, 78<br/>     goglyed, <i>goggle-eyed</i>, 273<br/>     grete father, <i>grandfather</i>,<br/>         128</p> <p>grynnes, <i>traps</i>, 29<br/>     guaryson, <i>cure</i>, 232<br/>     gwerdone, <i>reward</i>, 40</p> | <p>Ha a, ha! ah! pass.<br/>     habondaunce, <i>abundance</i>, 19<br/>     heed, by, <i>by [God's] head</i>,<br/>         184<br/>     herberowed, <i>harboured</i>, 29</p> <p>Incontynent, <i>immediately</i>,<br/>         67, 75, 106, 116, 258<br/>     induceth, <i>introduces</i>, 3<br/>     iumelle, <i>twin</i>, 302</p> <p>Janneye, <i>Genoese</i>, 312<br/>     Jene, <i>Genoa</i>, 312</p> <p>kynde, <i>nature</i>, 98, 105, 125,<br/>         218, 224, 272</p> <p>labourage, <i>labour</i>, 205<br/>     large, <i>generous</i>, 166<br/>     lawhe, <i>laugh</i>, 38<br/>     leneth, <i>supports</i>, 15<br/>     lese, <i>lose</i>, 236, 238<br/>     lesyng, <i>lying</i>, 187, 188, 205<br/>     lette, <i>prevent</i>, 122, 124, 125,<br/>         134, 141, 143, 199, 228,<br/>         308</p> <p>longyng, <i>belonging</i>, 316<br/>     luste, <i>desire</i>, 40<br/>     lygnage, <i>lineage</i>, 207<br/>     lyuebode, <i>inheritance</i>, 172,<br/>         300</p> <p>maculed, <i>guilty</i>, 261<br/>     marzhaunt, <i>merchant</i>, 275<br/>     meane, <i>middle</i>, 213</p> |
|--|--|

meke, *to humble*, 247  
 medycyn, *a doctor*, 66, 90  
 meue, *mow*, 175  
 megny, *men, company*, 84,  
     90, 204  
 molic, *mole*, 38  
 moo, *mow*, 184  
 mowe, *may*, 240, 267  
 mulet, *mule*, 128  
 mylan, *kite*, 8  
 myschaunt, *mischievous*, 55,  
     129  
 myster, *miss (?)*, 94  
 natall, *birthday feast*, 116  
 notary, *known*, 64  
 orysons, *prayers*, 187, 188  
 oultrecuydaunce, *overweening presumption*, 52  
 pactions, *agreements*, 47  
 partage, *partnership*, 11  
 parysshēs, *parishioners*, 316  
 payllard, *coward*, 25, 54, 57,  
     68  
 ploted, *pleaded*, 261  
 poure, *a poor man*, 261  
 procuratour, *proctor*, 260  
 propyce, *propitious*, 208  
 provysed, *provided*, 8  
 prymtemps, *spring*, 110  
 pulle, *fruit of beech*, 173  
 purveye, *provide*, 143  
 pyelarge, *mazpie*, 204

Rabe, *rabbi*, 294, 251  
 teleef, *lewin*, 3, 149  
 reluced, *shone*, 277  
 remercye, *thanks*, 287  
 resplendysshynge, *bright*, 21  
 retcheth, *recks*, 6, 82  
 ruffule, *swagger*, 241  
 salewed, *saluted*, 117  
 semblable, *like*, 112, 208  
 sewrte, *surety*, 89  
 separated, *separated*, 233  
 slowful, *ungrateful*, 206, 299  
 slowfulness, *ingratitude*, 64,  
     206  
 slyked, *cloven*, 203  
 sonde, *sound, bay*, 303  
 sowne, *sound*, 33  
 slange, *pool*, 161  
 spaehawk, *deerhawk (?)*, 8  
 sperehawk, *sparrowhawk*, 72  
 subget, *subject*, 30, 91, 244  
 subvertysel, *subverted*, 74  
 sygalle, *grasshopper*, 123  
 terryer, *lair*, 152, 154  
 theefly, *like a thief*, 81  
 thradde, *trod*, 61  
 thrested, *thrusted*, 61, 217  
 tryst, *sad*, 223  
 tumbours, *drums*, 95  
 vergoyne, *shame*, 52, 142,  
     189, 211  
 vergoynous, *ashamed*, 296

vnnethe, <i>scarcely</i> , 151, 183, 250	wood, <i>mad</i> , 120, 242, 154
vncōnyng, <i>silly</i> , 13	wodewose, <i>monster</i> , 242, 243
vnyed, <i>united</i> , 109	wreton, <i>written</i> , 272
vpverest, <i>uppermost</i> , 67	
vpsو doun, <i>upside down</i> , 68, 157, 163	yate, <i>gate</i> , 117, 216, 253, 272, 279, 295
vtyle, <i>useful</i> , 15, 76	ye, <i>yea</i> , <i>pass.</i>
vytupered, <i>blamed</i> , 76	yeftes, <i>gives</i> , 35, 36, 251
wodenes, <i>madness</i> , 222	yeue, <i>give</i> , 152
	yongthe, <i>youth</i> , 41









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